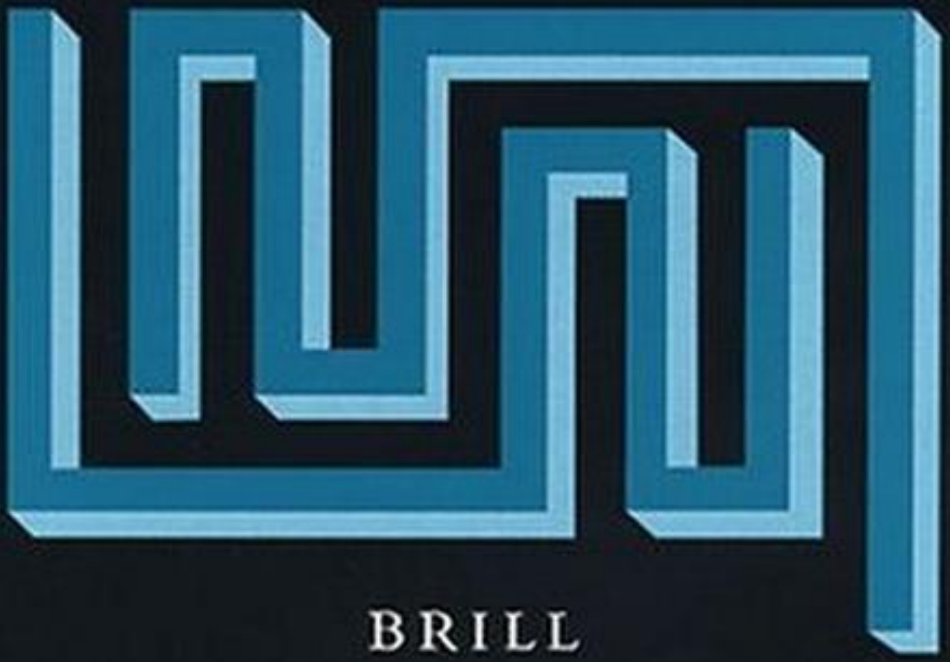
Peter L. Trudinger

The Psalms of the Tamid Service

A Liturgical Text from the Second Temple



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THE PSALMS OF THE TAMID SERVICE

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THE PSALMS OF THE TAMID SERVICE

A LITURGICAL TEXT FROM THE SECOND TEMPLE

BY

PETER L. TRUDINGER

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לְמַעַן תְּסַפְּרוּ לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן

To my teachers
Robert G. Hamerton-Kelly and John H. Hayes
and my children
Myfanwy and Josephine

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Twice each day, around dawn and in the mid-afternoon, regularly for almost the entire period the Second Temple stood in Jerusalem, a worship ceremony was held in the Temple to mark the start and the conclusion of the daily routine of sacrificial activities. The origin and early forms of this service are uncertain. In the course of time it became known as the Tamid, adopting as its name the Hebrew term for its most characteristic feature, continual repetition. Information on the Tamid has been preserved by several later sources, biblical and extra-biblical, most notably in the Mishnah tractate *Tamid*, which was named after the service. At the close of the Tamid service, at least in the morning, a psalm was performed by the choir of Levites (1 Chr 23:30–31; Sir 50:18; 11QPs^{a} XXVII, 4–6; *m. Tamid* 7:4). Towards the end of the Second Temple period (perhaps even as early as the start of the second century B.C.E.), these daily psalms followed a fixed weekly cycle of seven. The assignments are reported in the Septuagint (LXX) and the Mishnah – Ps 24 on Sunday, Ps 48 on Monday, Ps 82 on Tuesday, Ps 94 on Wednesday, Ps 81 on Thursday, Ps 93 on Friday and Ps 92 for the Sabbath. This collection of seven psalms, referred to subsequently as the Tamid Psalms, is the center of interest in the present work; the psalms are studied individually, as a group forming a literary text and in relation to their literary, historical and ritual contexts.

The Tamid Psalms have attracted very little attention in modern scholarship. They are usually mentioned in passing in works on the psalms, but less than a handful of essays has been devoted to them in the last fifty years. This lack is remarkable, as the Tamid Psalms possess some unusual properties. They form a liturgical text from the late Second Temple period which was "composed" (albeit from existing materials) for use in the Temple in Jerusalem and about which much is known – contents and context can be reliably established and the ritual setting in which they were performed is well-documented. It is rare to possess such extensive information about the setting of a text and there are few works whose origin can be

located among the groups who controlled the worship in the Temple. Consequently, the Tamid Psalms have much to offer for an understanding of the period, on their own and in comparison with other material.

1. *Groups of Psalms and Liturgical Collections*

The Tamid Psalms possess properties that place them at the intersection of several trajectories in current scholarship. At the forefront of these is their dual nature as a group of psalms and as a liturgical collection.

Scholars are accustomed to identifying groups of psalms from the Psalter. Some groups are defined by their superscriptions (e.g., the Psalms of Ascents, Ps 120–134; or the Psalms of Asaph, Ps 50, 73–83; or of Korah, Ps 42, 44–49, 84, 85, 87, 88), others are identified by structural indicators (e.g., the closing Hallelujah Psalms, Ps 146–150) and yet others formed on reasonable scholarly grounds (e.g., "Kingship of Yahweh" Psalms, Ps 47, 93, 95–99; and the Songs of Zion, Ps 46, 48, 76, 84, 87, 122). Interest in such groups of psalms has been present in biblical studies for a long time. Throughout the last century, for instance, the psalms that speak of the kingship of Yahweh were the foundation for theories concerning ancient Israelite rituals celebrating Yahweh's rule, and the collection of the Psalms of Ascents is often explained on ritual grounds. At a literary level, the Psalms of Asaph and Korah have been the subject of scrutiny to determine common linguistic features and other factors which might indicate the coherency of the collections. More recently attention has been given to the shaping of such groups and of the Psalter itself, that is, to the rationale underlying the ordering and placement of psalms – what binds sequences of psalms together, what characterizes psalms that mark boundaries, and what progression there might be (if any) through a group of psalms or through the Psalter itself.

Liturgical texts have also been attracting greater notice in scholarship in recent times. Here an important factor has been the dissemination of the discoveries at Qumran. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls some documents were found that are best described as collections of liturgical material ostensibly organized for sequential (perhaps cyclical) use. The short text 4QDibHam, *Words of the Luminaries*, appears to be a sequence of seven daily prayers, possibly used on a

weekly basis; 4QShirShabb, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, is in the form of a liturgy for thirteen Sabbaths; and 4QPrQuot, *Daily Prayers*, contains morning and evening prayers for a month.[1] These texts have received attention from scholars who have worked to reconstruct them; to identify literary features including structure, language and motifs; and from this, to deduce a context for their performance.

The Tamid Psalms belong to both the categories of groups of psalms and of liturgical texts. Their common use in the Tamid service justifies their association as a group. As a liturgical collection of pieces for sequential cyclical use, they are of the same ilk as some Qumran liturgical texts. They are also a group of psalms, even if the Psalter as preserved in the Masoretic Text (the MT Psalter) does not register this. Their superscriptions in that Psalter may not identify them as daily psalms, but most of them are clearly identified in the LXX.[2] They do not occur in a block in the canonical Psalter, but neither, for example, do other collections, such as the Kingship of Yahweh Psalms or the Psalms of Asaph. The silence on the part of the MT Psalter does not invalidate detailed study of the Tamid Psalms alongside other groups from the canonical Psalter.[3]

The dual nature of the Tamid Psalms suggests it is appropriate to examine them in the same ways as one might examine any other collection of psalms or a liturgical text, investigating, for instance, their literary features and their relation to their ritual context. In this regard, the Tamid Psalms have two advantages over many other such collections – their text is well preserved (it is no worse than any other selection from the canonical Psalter and certainly better than many Qumran documents) and their ritual context is comparatively

[1] The classification as liturgical is based on formal literary grounds. There is no explicit evidence that any of these pieces actually was performed in any ritual. On 4QDibHam, see below, 5.3. On Qumran liturgical texts, see Bilhah Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry* (trans. J. Chipman; *STDJ* 12; Leiden: Brill, 1994); Esther G. Chazon, "Hymns and Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (ed. Peter W. Flint and James C. Vanderkam; vol. 1; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 244–70; Daniel K. Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (*STDJ* 27; Leiden: Brill, 1998); James R. Davila, *Liturgical Works* (ECDSS 6; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000).

[2] See ch. 2.5 below.

[3] No manuscript survives of these psalms in their liturgical order, but there are other groups that are studied for which no ms survives, e.g., Psalms of Asaph or the Sayings Source Q.

well documented (much better, for instance, than that of the Kingship of Yahweh Psalms or 4QDibHam).

Investigation of the Tamid Psalms in their own right leads naturally to the question of their role in comparative studies with other psalm groups or liturgical texts. Analysis of this collection of psalms yields insights into the principles on which sets of texts were assembled. The type and nature of any coherency on a literary level among the Tamid Psalms gives an indication of what might be expected for other groups of psalms. The degree of connection between the Tamid Psalms and their ritual context provides a point of comparison against which to judge the connection between some other group and its putative ritual context. When used in these ways, the Tamid Psalms can serve a positive and a negative critical function. If the Tamid Psalms display a certain characteristic, such as literary cohesion, rationale for order, or connection to their ritual context, then one might reasonably seek it in other groups of psalms and raise questions if it is absent or not exhibited as strongly. If, on the other hand, as a group the Tamid Psalms appear to be deficient with regard to a certain characteristic, then there is less justification for expecting such a characteristic in another group or sequence of psalms. These comparisons require that matters of coherency and connection be raised for the Tamid Psalms. Thus the study of this liturgical collection can throw light on the nature of liturgical texts from the Second Temple period (compositional strategies, performance, and the like) or serve as a model or test case for investigation of other works.

On a broader canvas, the Tamid Psalms also have the potential to provide windows into different facets of Judaism in the late Second Temple period. As will be explained in chapter 2, the Tamid service was fundamental to the functioning of the cult, and knowledge of it and the Tamid Psalms was widely distributed in Judaism. Some links between the Tamid Psalms and Judaism are exposed in this study. There are likely to be more.

In sum, there are good precedents for a study of the collection of seven daily psalms. They are a group identifiable by their superscriptions (in the LXX) and such groups from the canonical Psalter are studied regularly; they are a liturgical collection, and such collections from Qumran are of interest; and they are a reconstructed text, but scrutiny of reconstructed texts is common. Their use in the Tamid service was widely known, perhaps more so than some col-

lections from Qumran. In return for effort of study, they offer the possibility of providing insight into liturgical texts, collections of psalms, and the religious beliefs and practices of their period.

2. *Composition by Reuse*

In the previous section, the terms collection and text were applied interchangeably to the Tamid Psalms and questions of literary features raised as if the collection of seven psalms were an original composition. The daily psalms, however, were not composed for the Tamid service in the same way that, for example, Esther Chazon has suggested that the prayers 4QDibHam were original compositions written for sequential use.[4] The text of seven Tamid Psalms was formed from the reuse of existing material, taken from its original context and placed in the new liturgical setting of the Tamid service. In this sense, it is an "anthology." However, a large part of this study is devoted to treating the Tamid Psalms in much the same way one might handle any other biblical text, and a major conclusion in chapter 4 is that the Tamid Psalms are a composition, the intentional product of creative authorial activity.[5] The concepts of anthologization and composition may seem, at least on the surface, to be incompatable. Consequently, some observations on the phenomenon of reuse of existing material are appropriate at this point, to show that this is a valid process of composition.

As a text formed from reuse of existing material, the Tamid Psalms are not unique. Many other such texts exist, especially in the Hebrew Bible. The Psalter itself provides one example. On the surface, it appears as a collection of independent units. Yet one line of research in Psalms studies has pursued questions concerning the composition of the whole: What are the relationships between consecutive psalms (e.g., between Ps 1 and 2, or Ps 9 and 10)? Is there a rationale in the internal layout of the five books or of the Psalter as a whole? Do Ps 1 or Ps 150 perform a particular function? Why do certain

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[4] Esther G. Chazon, "4QDibHam: Liturgy or Literature?," *RevQ* 15 (1991): 447–55.

[5] The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives as one meaning for composition, "An intellectual production . . . a work of art (esp. a drawing or painting) consisting of several elements artistically combined."

genres predominate? What does the Psalter reveal about religious understanding in the Second Temple period? Like the Psalter, the book of Proverbs is another example of a composition that takes the ostensible form of a collection of units, but about which it is valid to ask questions concerning coherency and relationships between the parts and the religious implications of the larger groups. Other examples of reuse abound. The Chronicler combined existing psalmic materials (1 Chr 16:8–36). The Song of Songs, it is often asserted, is constructed out of pre-existing pieces, whose thematic and linguistic coherence is much debated. The collections of the oracles of the prophets again show reuse of received material. (Of particular note here is the book of the prophet Jeremiah, which survives in two distinct orders and thus provides manuscript evidence of flexibility in the process of assembling textual units.) These examples are of a kind in that they exhibit the reuse of received material. They differ in the amount of editorial or redactional activity that is detected in the process of reworking this material. Regardless of this, they testify to the existence of a long-standing literary tradition in Israel of composition utilizing previous work.[6]

Traditions of composition by reuse continue today. Collage, the appropriation of existing material into a new work, is a recognized technique in art. In literature, the poet Annie Dillard published a book of poems formed by the juxtaposition of phrases and sentences clipped from other sources, ranging from astronomical publications to popular magazines.[7] The creative element in these works lies in the selection and arrangement of the pieces.

Thus the nature of the Tamid Psalms as a liturgical anthology formed from pre-existing textual units does not, *a priori*, preclude considering it a composition.[8] The issue is not whether it is *possible* for a collection to be a composition, but of the *extent* to which this

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[6] Composition through the reuse of existing psalmic material is also found in the Dead Sea Scrolls; for a brief discussion, see Eileen M. Schuller, *Non-Canonical Psalms from Qumran: A Pseudepigraphic Collection* (HSS 28; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 10–12. On prayer texts from the Second Temple period which reuse biblical material, see Judith H. Newman, *Praying by the Book: The Scripturalization of Prayer in Second Temple Judaism* (SBLEJL 14; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999).

[7] Annie Dillard, *Mornings Like This: Found Poems* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995).

[8] When placed in the tradition of composition by reuse of existing material, the Tamid Psalms is a relatively young text. It does not show the same level of redactional activity as, say, the Pentateuch. Conversely, the circumstances of its birth are much clearer.

particular collection, the Tamid Psalms, exhibits evidence of intentional "authorial" (or editorial) activity, that is, of the extent to which it warrants being called an *original* composition. This is judged by asking of the text the same sorts of questions that might be asked of any other biblical text whose unity is under examination – questions concerning language, structure, motifs, theme and principles of organization. The answers given to these questions determine the degree to which authorial or editorial activity is evident in the text, and thus, whether the text is regarded merely as a liturgical anthology or as a unitary literary creation, a composition.

3. *Prior Studies*

The Tamid Psalms, as a collection used in the cult, have received scant scrutiny from scholars. In many treatments of the Psalter or the Tamid service they are given only cursory mention, if at all. The assignment of psalms to the days is usually mentioned almost in passing perhaps along with some brief conjecture about their date of adoption, but no detailed discussion usually appears.[9] In some more specialized essays, such as those concerning psalm use in the Second Temple, a little more space may be given to the Tamid Psalms, but again, the analysis tends to be superficial.[10] These works tend to concentrate their attention primarily on the individual psalms. The collection as a whole is not considered, and consequently this

[9] See, e.g., Marie Despina, "La liturgie quotidienne au temple de Jerusalem d'après la Mishna," *Recontre Chretiens et Juifs* 15 (1970): 21; John H. Hayes, *Understanding the Psalms* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1976), 16; Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)*, vol. 2 (rev. ed.; ed. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar and Matthew Black; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979), 303.

[10] For example, Michael Maher concentrates on the identification of the psalms; questions of rationale or content take only a few lines. He regards the psalms as being of a "non-essential nature" for the ritual, a claim that will be strongly countered by the present study. Gerard F. Willems concentrates on the talmudic rationale for the collection, with a very brief mention of creation themes in the psalms. On the other hand, Roger T. Beckwith uses the motifs in the psalms in his theory of the organization of 11QPs[a]. See Beckwith, "The Qumran Psalter: The Courses of the Levites and the Use of the Psalms at Qumran," in *Calendar and Chronology, Jewish and Christian* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 141–66; repr. with minor alterations from *RevQ* 11 (1984): 499–524; Maher, "The Psalms in Jewish Worship," *PIBA* 17 (1994): 10–13, esp. 12 n. 3; Willems, "Les Psaumes dans la liturgie juive," *Bijdr* 51 (1990): 399–404.

precludes investigation of matters appropriate to the seven psalms as a text, such as aspects of its unity, literary properties, or relationship to other liturgical works.

In the last fifty years, there have been only two studies devoted to the Tamid Psalms as a group. These will be treated in detail at appropriate places in following chapters and will only be outlined now. In the earlier essay of the two, Yehudah A. Liebreich sought to explain the rationale underlying the selection of the different psalms.[11] He briefly surveyed and rejected previous explanations before advancing his own, which was that the collection was assembled for a didactic hortatory purpose, to teach the faithful that God will ultimately provide for them. He also considered some of the common language of the seven psalms and the motifs linking them. About thirty years later, the rationale for the collection was the subject of an article by Henri Plantin.[12] After some preliminary comments identifying the psalms, Plantin laid out a theory that the seven psalms came into daily use after the successful Maccabean revolt, with the psalms chosen for their allusions to aspects of oppression, revolt and victory. The group of seven psalms, he argued, was formed by the amalgamation of two other groups, whose prior ritual context he identified with confidence as two major festivals.

4. *The Present Study and its Organization*

The present study is a comprehensive examination of the Tamid Psalms as a literary text and as a liturgical text. As such, it goes well beyond the previous investigations in scope and detail.

The examination of the Tamid Psalms as a literary text forms the bulk of this work. The study of texts has traditionally dealt with issues such as provenance, date of creation, the establishment of the text and exegesis of its contents. All this can be carried out for the Tamid Psalms. There are also other issues that deal with the factors that give a sense of unity or coherence – questions of common language, structure, motifs, overarching theme, plot and other global

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[11] Yehudah A. Liebreich, "The Psalms of the Levites for the Days of the Week (in Hebrew)," *ErIsr* 3 (1954): 170–73.

[12] Henry Plantin, "Leviternas veckodagspsalmer i templet," *SEÅ* 48 (1983): 48–76.

attributes of the composition. In the case of the Tamid Psalms, the investigation of these matters takes a different tack than that followed for most other texts. Because the psalms are also a collection whose text has been re-constituted from references in secondary sources, the investigation of holistic features needs to be concerned not only with identifying such attributes, but also with estimating the extent to which they are present in this collection. Ultimately, this leads to a decision as to whether the psalms are more like an intentional unified composition than a loosely-related assemblage of shorter units. The question of coherence of the Tamid Psalms cannot be assumed but is decided on the basis of critical investigation of the collection.

As a liturgical text, the Tamid Psalms attract another range of questions: What was the ritual in which they were located? How did their performance interact with this ritual as its immediate context and with the totality of the ritual performances of the day in the Temple? What do its contents reveal about the religious practices and beliefs of Second Temple Judaism? These issues are also addressed, although not in as much detail as the literary ones.

Finally, as a literary and liturgical text, the Tamid Psalms may be arrayed alongside other such works. Here a comparative program unfolds. How do the Tamid Psalms compare with other such works? Such a program is open-ended. There are many texts with which one might compare the Tamid Psalms and many levels on which the comparison might take place, both literary (structure, motifs, and so on) and ritual (role, effect, relation to culture, and so on). In this study comparisons are carried out only for a few texts and only in brief.

The discussion of the Tamid Psalms is organized as follows:

Chapter two is a review of what is known about the Tamid service from biblical, non-canonical and early rabbinical sources. It demonstrates the importance of the Tamid service and the likelihood that the Tamid Psalms were well-known, thereby reinforcing the case that the collection is worthy of study. From a text critical point of view, the review provides the basic data for the identification of the Tamid Psalms ("establishing the text") and a discussion of the date when the collection came into use ("date of composition").

Chapter three consists of a series of exegetical studies of each of the seven psalms. The detailed analysis in this chapter lays the

groundwork for the broader treatment of the psalms as a group that follows. These studies also yield benefits in their own right. The individual psalms, of course, have been much studied in the past. In the present study, some new insights into the psalms are won in part through reconfiguration of the rich resource of past studies. An unusual perspective is taken on critical issues, namely, interpreting each psalm in the context of the late Second Temple Period. This means issues that frequently dominate Psalms study such as Canaanite precursors, original wording or liturgical use in the New Year's Festival slip out of sight. A sensitivity to the immediate textual context of each psalm, that is, to the other Tamid Psalms, is also maintained, and this in turn influences the evaluation of the appropriateness of different interpretations. The flavor of the exegesis in this chapter tends to be literary and holistic.

Chapter four examines the psalms in relation to each other, that is, the Tamid Psalms as a literary composition. It starts by enumerating the common vocabulary in the collection and then deepens into a consideration of the connections, both linguistic and thematic, between pairs of psalms. From this conclusions are drawn about the structure of the collection. Next the study moves to look at the whole collection. A set of common motifs are described, as well as a description of the characterization of the various "agents" in the Psalms – Yahweh, the righteous, the wicked and Zion. After this, attention is given to other factors that serve as indicators of a greater degree of coherence among the psalms. It is argued that a theme for the collection can be determined and then that the collection exhibits developmental features, both psychological and literary. The cumulative conclusion from this chapter is that the Tamid Psalms may justly be regarded as a creative and intentional composition.

In chapter five the Tamid Psalms are placed in different contexts and their contributions to those contexts are investigated. The first treated is the ritual context – the morning worship at the Temple. Performance theory and comparative material from other cultural contexts, primarily Hindu, is drawn upon to elucidate the role of the psalms in the Temple rituals. The appeal to performance studies anchors the investigation in a wider scholarly context and moderates the speculative element. The remainder of chapter five is given over to literary contexts. Comparisons are made between the Tamid Psalms and some other collections of written material – the Psalms

of Ascents and Ps 90–100 as groups of canonical psalms, and 4QDibHam as another liturgical weekly cycle. The comparison with Ps 90–100 has implications for the on-going debate over the formation of the Psalter and the contribution of the Tamid Psalms to this debate is presented.

CHAPTER TWO

THE TAMID SERVICE

The Tamid service was the most frequently performed public sacrifice in Jerusalem. References to the service are found scattered throughout the biblical and extra-biblical material, in the three divisions of the Hebrew Bible, in apocryphal, pseudepigraphical, and sectarian writings, in classical Jewish authors such as Philo and Josephus, and in later rabbinic remembrances, including an entire tractate of the Mishnah. For the most part, these references are fairly short, usually no more than a verse or two. Taken together, they provide extensive information on the service, yet at the same time, leave gaps and create puzzles about the performance of the service and its development over time.

This chapter reviews these references and the issues they raise. A picture of the service and its significance is built up from them. Since the central interest in this work is the psalms of the Tamid service, particular attention is paid to texts bearing on their identification and performance.

The plurality of references to the Tamid ritual requires some form of organization to facilitate presentation. There are several ways in which ritual references might be grouped. For example, one might follow the supposed temporal order of the writing, from the earlier documents to the later, or a canonical order, starting with the Torah. A third way will be utilized here. Ritual texts may be divided into the categories of descriptive and prescriptive texts. Prescriptive texts lay out in a legislative manner regulations concerning the performance of a certain ritual. Descriptive texts describe in narrative or formulaic form the performance of the ritual at a certain, possibly typical, occasion. This distinction is employed here to classify the ritual texts for the Tamid service.[1] The two categories, however, do

[1] The distinction was introduced for biblical texts by Baruch Levine and developed by Anson Rainey. See Baruch Levine, "Ugaritic Descriptive Rituals," *JCS* 17 (1963): 105–11; idem, "The Descriptive Tabernacle Texts of the Pentateuch," *JAOS*

not span all relevant texts. Another category is also required. References to the Tamid service often also occur in non-ritual texts, as part of a narrative where the Tamid service is not the primary focus of interest, but is included to support some aspect of the main story line, for example as a marker of the time of day, or to add color to the story. There are enough of these non-ritual texts to form a category of their own. They yield information about details and variations in the service, as well as attitudes to it.

Descriptive texts are considered first; they give a feel for what the service involved. This category also yields the most information about the service. Next prescriptive texts are treated and then non-ritual texts. After this presentation of the source material there is a brief discussion of the history of the service, a topic that has been considered by several scholars. The fifth section in the chapter concerns the identification of the seven psalms which were sung at the service.

The terms Tamid, Tamid service, Tamid ritual, and references to the daily worship will be used interchangeably here. In fact, as will be seen, the Tamid service was not one ritual, but a complex of rituals performed differently in the morning and afternoon (or early evening). At their core lay the sacrifice of a lamb and its offering as a burnt offering, an *ʿolah*, on the altar of burnt sacrifices.[2] That process itself might have taken over one hour. Other ritual activities were also carried out before, during and after the sacrifice and offering. Those rituals also may be considered part of the Tamid worship service and are treated as such in the descriptive accounts in the Mishnah and Ben Sira. A psalm was sung at the close of the service each day.

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85 (1965): 307–18; Anson Rainey, "The Order of Sacrifices in the Old Testament Ritual Texts," *Bib* 51 (1970): 485–98. The differences between the categories may be seen in a comparison between the descriptive account of sacrifices found in Num 7:12–88 and the prescriptive account of Num 28–30, both of which, according to Levine, are reworkings of the same archival material ("Tabernacle Texts," 314–18).

[2] On the performance of this offering in the late Second Temple Period, see Anders Hultgard, "The Burnt-Offering in Early Jewish Religion: Sources, Practices and Purpose," in *Gifts to the Gods: Proceedings of the Uppsala Symposium 1985 (*ed. Tullia Linders and Gullög Nordquist; BOREAS 15; Uppsala: University of Uppsala, 1987), 83–91.

1. *Descriptive Texts for the Tamid Ritual*

Remarkably few passages contain descriptions of the Tamid service. The most comprehensive account is found in the Mishnah. Strictly speaking this collection lies outside the period of the Second Temple. However, in all probability, in tractate *Tamid* and in references scattered elsewhere, the Mishnah has preserved reliable information on the last form of the daily morning ritual. In addition, the Mishnaic material provides a colorful introduction to the complete procedures of the morning rituals of which the Tamid Psalms formed the conclusion.[3]

1.1 *The Ritual in Tractate* Tamid

The Mishnah tractate *Tamid* takes its name from that of the daily service.[4] In content, this tractate includes much more than procedures for the killing of the sacrifice and its offering. It describes, in a narrative-like fashion, events in the Temple in the morning, starting with the sleeping arrangements of the priests and concluding with the offering of the Tamid sacrifice upon the altar and the songs of the Levites. The tractate is unusual amongst Mishnaic tractates in that it contains very few explicit references to rabbinic opinions or overt debate. What follows is a summary of the tractate.

Preparations for the service began before daybreak (*m. Tamid* 1:2). The priests had spent the night in the Temple (1:1). After rising,

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[3] Reconstructions of the Tamid service can be found in several places. Usually, these synthesize Mishnaic and talmudic references without weighing the accuracy of the sources. For a full, perhaps too full, description, see Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple: Its Ministry and Services* (1874; repr., Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1950), 152–73; or for a description that uses only Mishnaic material, see Marie Despina, "La liturgie quotidienne au temple de Jerusalem d'après la Mishna," *Recontre Chretiens et Juifs* 15 (1970): 8–22. Emil Schürer draws on a wider variety of sources and touches on some of the issues raised in the present chapter; see Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135),* Vol. 2 (rev. ed.; ed. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar and Matthew Black; Edinburgh: Clark, 1979), 299–307.

[4] A critical edition of *m. Tamid* was produced by Abraham Brody, *Der Mišna-Traktat Tamid: Text nach einer Vatikan-Handschrift nebst Variae Lectiones aus 12 Talmud- und Mišnahandschriften sowie ältesten Drucken mit erstmaliger Anführung von Paralleltexten aus beiden Talmuden, Tosæpta, Midraš und anderen: übersetzt, kommentiert und mit Einleitung.* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells Boktryckeri-A.-B., 1936). For an English translation, see Herbert Danby. *The Mishnah: Translated from the Hebrew with Introduction and Brief Explanatory Notes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933).

some went to make cakes for the offering of the high priest that accompanied the morning sacrifice (1:3),[5] while others carried out maintenance activities on the sacrificial altar,[6] such as raking the ashes of the previous day's sacrifices, rearranging unburnt portions, clearing away the old cinders, and bringing up a fresh supply of wood (1:4; 2:1–5).

Various ritual duties associated with the morning service were then assigned by a random process.[7] These duties included removing ashes from the incense altar inside the sanctuary proper, trimming the candlesticks inside the sanctuary,[8] slaughtering and carving up the sacrificial lamb, and bearing the pieces of the lamb along with accompanying offerings (3:1).

The ritual itself began shortly after daybreak (3:2). The slaughter of the lamb was coordinated with the opening of the gate to the Sanctuary. The priests who had duties inside the Sanctuary went to their places. One priest was to open the door of the Sanctuary from the inside after entering by a smaller side door (3:6, 7). While they were on their way, the lamb was brought out from the room in which the sacrificial lambs were sequestered, checked one final time for any trace of imperfection and then led to the place of slaughter near the altar (3:3–5). Slaughter of the morning and afternoon sacrifices occurred in different locations in the abattoir area (4:1). The lamb was only killed when the sound of the gate opening was heard. The tractate also includes claims about the distance from which the sounds and smells could be noticed, including the sound of the gate opening and the singing (3:8).[9]

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[5] The corresponding biblical injunction is found in Lev 6:12–15 (6:19–23 NRSV).

[6] See Lev 6:1–6 (6:8–13 NRSV).

[7] A number would be chosen, then the priests would put out one or two fingers to be counted. The tasks were assigned starting with the person who counted off with the selected number. This process was repeated at various times in the morning, first to select those who would prepare the altar, then to select thirteen people involved in the slaughter. A third lottery selected a priest to offer the incense in the sanctuary. It appears that there was also a fourth, to decide which priests would actually complete the offering at the altar, although this was disputed in the Mishnah (*m. Tamid* 1:2, 3:1, 5:2, cf. *m. Yoma* 2:1–4).

[8] The candles were trimmed in two groups before and after the sacrifice. For regulations concerning the maintenance of the lamp and offering incense, see Exod 27:20–21; 30:7–8.

[9] These claims appear exaggerated, e.g., it is unlikely that the high priest's voice would carry 14 miles to Jericho as claimed in *m. Tamid* 3:8.

Description of the dismemberment of the lamb is given in great detail (4:1–3).[10] The portions of the lamb were given to six priests to bear, while three others carried the cakes, grain and wine offerings. The blood was taken immediately to the altar, where some of it was sprinkled on the corners and the rest poured at the base. The procession of nine priests with the offerings, however, did not go up to the altar straightaway, but they deposited their offerings on the ramp leading to the top of the altar and went into a room for what appears to be a short devotional service, in which various benedictions were pronounced and passages of Scripture recited (5:1, cf., *m. Sheqal.* 8:8).[11] This service was followed by another selection procedure (or perhaps two) to determine who would offer incense on the inner altar and who would carry the portions of the lamb up the ramp for the burnt offering (5:2). Once this was decided, the priests who did not have a duty in the service removed and stored their vestments (5:3). As those with duties proceeded to their places, a device was sounded as a signal to summon the choir of Levites and to warn priests and other observers to prepare for the offering (5:4–6).

Completion of the rituals inside the sanctuary is described before the presentation of the burnt offering. The remaining untrimmed candles were trimmed, the ash bin and oil jar removed and finally, the incense poured on the altar (6:1–3). The priests then assembled on the steps of the porch and a blessing was pronounced over the people (7:2).[12] The record at this point indicates that the divine name was spoken in this blessing.[13]

The description of the act of offering the sacrifice on the altar concentrates only on the way this was performed when the high priest chose to participate (7:1, 3). The priests who were carrying the parts of the animal would give them to the High Priest in turn.

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[10] The disposal of the hide of the animal is not mentioned. In other sacrifices, this would go to the officiating priest (Lev 7:8). See below, n. 62.

[11] The Ten Commandments, the Shema (Deut 6:4–9), Deut 11:13–21, Num 15:37–41, the benedictions in Num 6:24–26, "Abodah," "True and Sure," an unnamed benediction, and on the Sabbath a benediction for the outgoing course of Levites. See n. 45.

[12] In some mss, ch. 7 is incorporated into ch. 6, so 7:1 = 6:4, etc. See Brody, *Traktat Tamid*, 2 n. 9, 10–31; H. L. Strack and G. Stemberger, *Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash* (trans. Markus Bockmuehl; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 135.

[13] *M. Tamid* 7:2, found also at *m. Sotah* 7:6. This blessing was probably Num 24:6–8. The divine name was also pronounced on the Day of Atonement (*m. Yoma* 3:8, 4:2, 6:2; *m. Tamid* 3:8).

He would lay his hands on the portions and then toss them onto the altar, or if he wished, allow the priests to toss them. Then the high priest walked around the altar to the southwestern corner where the wine offering was poured.[14] This offering was announced by the sounding of trumpets. The levitical choir began singing as the wine offering was being poured. The singing was punctuated by pauses in which trumpets sounded and the people prostrated themselves.

The tractate closes with a list of psalms that the choir sang on each day of the week (7:4), starting, on Sunday, with Ps 24, then 48, 82, 94, 81, 93, and the Sabbath Psalm, 92.[15]

> The songs which the Levites used to sing in the Temple:
> On the first day they sang
> The earth belongs to the Lord and everything in it; the world and those who dwell in it.
> On the second day they sang
> Great is the Lord and very worthy of praise in the city of our God, his holy mountain.
> On the third day they sang
> God stands up in the divine assembly; in the midst of the divine beings he rules.
> On the fourth day they sang
> God of vengeance, O Lord, God of vengeance, appear in splendor!
> On the fifth day they sang
> Shout for joy to God our strength, cheer for the God of Jacob.
> On the sixth day they sang
> The Lord reigns! He is arrayed in majesty.
> On the Sabbath they sang.
> A Psalm, A Song for the Sabbath. A psalm, a song for the time to come, for the day that is all Sabbath and rest in eternal life.

The tractate *Tamid* is unusual in the Mishnah in that it is comprised almost entirely of descriptive material in a narrative form, with only three references to rabbinical authorities for support (in 3:8, 5:2, 7:2) and even less for differing opinions.[16] The tractate also includes many points of fine detail. Its style fosters the impression that it provides

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[14] The tradition of the wine offering is discussed by Jeffrey L. Rubenstein, "The History of Sukkot During the Second Temple and Rabbinic Periods: Studies in the Continuity and Change of a Festival" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1992), 229–46.

[15] The list is repeated in *Soferim* 18:1.

[16] Louis Ginzberg calculated that of the more than 500 other chapters in the Mishnah apart from Tamid, only six lack references to authorities; see Ginzberg, "Tamid; The Oldest Treatise of the Mishnah," *JJLP* 1 (1919): 38–40.

a thorough description of the Tamid service. This, however, is not the case. There are many gaps in the record of the service provided by the tractate. Little is said about the afternoon service. To what extent did it follow the same pattern as the morning Tamid?[17] Were the psalms sung at both services or just in the morning? How were they performed? The sudden introduction of the high priest in *m. Tamid* 7 raises questions.[18] What part did the high priest play in the parts of the ritual before the offering, for example, in the slaughter and sprinkling of blood? How often did he participate in the service? If he chose not to celebrate, what procedure did the ordinary priests follow for the sacrifice? These questions, and many others, are left unanswered in *m. Tamid.*

1.2 *The Tamid Service in Other Mishnaic Tractates*

Nowhere else in the Mishnah is there any passage that matches the detailed description of the morning rituals found in *m. Tamid.* There are, however, references to the Tamid service scattered in other Mishnaic tractates that give a little more information on the service and partially fill some of the gaps.[19]

More information on the role of the high priest is found in *m. Yoma.* At the Tamid service on the day of the observance of Yom Kippur, he was required to participate in most of the priestly duties associated with the Tamid sacrifice (slaughter, sprinkling blood, offering

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[17] The tractate refers to the afternoon service twice (4:1, 6:1) and then only in passing. The lamb was killed in a different location in the abattoir in the afternoon (4:1, the difference may have come about out of a desire to orient the sacrifice towards the sun), and the last two candlesticks were trimmed differently in the afternoon (6:1). There is much that is neither said nor obvious – what elements were included in the afternoon service apart from the sacrifice? When did it occur? Did it coordinate with the closing of the Temple gate? Were the elements in common with the morning service performed in the same order?

[18] Ginzberg found this change quite disturbing and put it down to a later alteration to the text. "The compiler would not have failed to give a description of the ordinary manner of this offering, when performed by ordinary priests before proceeding with the regulations dealing with the special case when the 'pieces' were offered by the high priest" ("Tamid," 280). Such a view presumes too much insight into the mind of the "compiler." The other detailed description of a portion of the service, Sir 50:5–21, also restricts itself to the role of the high priest. See further n. 52.

[19] For example, *m. Pesah.* 5:1, 3, 4; *Sheqal.* 4:1; 8:8; *Yoma* 1:2, 8; 2:1–5; 3:1, 2, 4–6; 4:4, 5; 7:3, 4; *Sukkah* 5:5, 7; *Ta'an.* 4:1–4; 6; *Sotah* 7:6; *'Arak.* 2:5; *Menah.* 4:4, 5; 11:3.

incense, trimming lamps and sacrifice of portions on the altar), although others assisted (1:2, 3:4). For the Tamid, but not the entire Yom Kippur service, he officiated in his golden vestments, suggesting that he also wore these vestments whenever he participated in a daily service at other times of the year.

When the high priest did not officiate, the Tamid ritual was performed by the rostered priestly course (*m. Sukkah* 5:7). There were twenty-four such courses, each responsible for routine services in the Temple for one week twice per year. All courses were involved in festival celebrations. Courses changed on the Sabbath, when the outgoing course performed the morning service and the incoming the afternoon. The division into twenty-four also carried through to the Levites and lay Israelites. The corresponding course of Levites fulfilled their duties in the Temple alongside the priests. Representatives of the people were also required at the Tamid service, since the daily offering was made on behalf of all Israel. Members of the corresponding lay "course" fulfilled this role.[20] Thus according to the Mishnaic tradition, lay worshippers were always present in the Temple for the daily service. The rostered course of priests, Levites and lay people was known as the *Maʿamad*.[21]

Priests, Levites and other Israelites who were not present in Jerusalem during their rostered week are reported to have marked the occasion of their course's rotation with special devotional activities in their towns (*m. Taʿan.* 4:1–5). During that week, they assembled for worship at the time of the daily service.[22] Over the six weekdays they would read or recite from memory the story of Creation from Gen 1.[23] They also fasted for four days, from Monday to Thursday. Hence the daily service was celebrated in some form in every Jewish community and known to every Jewish male.

Performance of the Tamid ritual was accompanied by blasts of trumpets. According to *m. Sukkah* 5:5, trumpets sounded three times

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[20] *M. Taʿan.* 4:2 which quotes Num 28.2 as the corresponding injunction.

[21] The twenty-four courses were known as the *Mishmarot.* For further information on the courses, see Jacob Liver and Daniel Sperber, "Mishmarot and Maʿamadot," *EncJud* 12:90–93; Schürer, *History of Jewish People*, 2:292–93.

[22] There was no meeting on Friday afternoon, in order to allow time for preparations for the Sabbath, nor did they meet on the Sabbath. Some other exceptions are listed in *m. Taʿan.* 4:2–5.

[23] Sunday: Gen 1:1–5; Monday: 1:6–8; Tuesday: 1:9–13; Wednesday: 1:14–19; Thursday: 1:20–23; Friday: 1:24–2:1 (*m. Taʿan.* 4:3).

when the gate was opened and nine times, in three groups of three, during each of the morning and evening offerings.[24] The blasts at the Tamid service occurred at the wine offering and at breaks in the singing (*m. Tamid* 7:3, cf. Sir 50:16). How psalms of differing lengths (compare Ps 93 and 94) might have been split into sections by the triple blasts is a fascinating question, but probably unanswerable. The inclusion of trumpet blasts in the afternoon (*m. Sukkah* 5:5) and their coordination with singing (*m. Tamid* 7:3) provide circumstantial evidence that the psalms were sung in the afternoon Tamid.

In the Mishnah, the Tamid services are regarded as crucial components of the ritual activities of the Temple. The validity of the other sacrifices depended on their performance.[25] The morning daily offering preceded all other offerings (*m. Zebah.* 10:1) and, except for the Passover sacrifice, no sacrifice could follow the afternoon Tamid (*m. Pesah* 5:1, 3). The occasion of the cessation of the daily service in 70 C.E. was a black day. According to legend, that day, the 17th of Tammuz, was also the anniversary of four other catastrophes: the breaking of the tablets containing the Ten Commandments, the breaching of the walls of Jerusalem, the setting up of an idol in the Sanctuary and the burning of the scrolls of the Law (*m. Ta'an* 4:6).

The time of the services was not so crucial. There is a story that once the morning service did not take place until the fourth hour (9–10 am; *m. 'Ed.* 6:1). The afternoon service usually commenced at half after the eighth hour (nominally 2:30 pm), with the slaughter of the lamb, and the portions were offered on the altar one hour later (*m. Pesah.* 5:1, 3).[26] According to the Talmud the ritual could

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[24] Additional blasts were also sounded at the services on the Sabbath and at Sukkoth (*m. Sukkah* 5:4, 5).

[25] If the morning Tamid was inadvertently rendered invalid or not performed, either by an error or external interference, the afternoon sacrifice was considered to take its place and render valid the sacrifices of the day (*m. Menah.* 4:4).

[26] The time of the afternoon sacrifice and offering was advanced on the Passover and followed by the sacrifice for the Passover. A few other details about the afternoon service can be found in the Mishnah. The procession included extra priests – routinely two who carried a "wood offering" to replenish the fire for the night (*m. Yoma* 2:5) – and others were required on festival days. The order of the offerings differed slightly from that of the morning. In the afternoon, the incense was offered between the burnt offering and the wine offering, whereas it preceded the burnt offering in the morning (*m. Yoma* 3:5). According to *b. Yoma* 26b, 34a, the same priests officiated in the afternoon as at the morning service, so no extra selection process was required. On a Sabbath, when the courses changed, the incoming priests had to choose who would perform the afternoon daily service (*b. Sukkah* 56b).

take place anytime after the afternoon shadows began to lengthen, anytime after approximately 12:30 pm (*b. Pesah.* 58a, b).

According to *m. Sheqal.* 4:1, the daily sacrifice was funded from the Temple Shekel tax.[27]

1.3 *The Tamid Service in Other Rabbinical Literature*

References to the Tamid service appear in rabbinical writings after the Mishnah. With the passage of time, however, the authors and commentators moved further away from the era of the service about which they professed to comment and so the likelihood of inaccuracies in their writings increases. The aim of these later writers was less to record the details of a service and more to preserve a tradition of faith by interpreting it for their contemporary audience. Only a few observations on the later writings will be made here.

The tractate *Tamid* itself did not elicit much comment in rabbinic literature. It is absent from the Tosefta and the Palestinian Talmud. The discussion of tractate Tamid in the Babylonian Talmud is relatively brief. There is no Gemara on chapters 3, 5, 6 or 7 of the Mishnah, and the Gemara on chapter 2 is short. The Gemara says little about the service itself.[28] A lengthier discussion of the daily service appears in tractate *b. Yoma*, for the most part associated with the Gemara on those sections of *m. Yoma* where the daily service is mentioned. The focus here is on the details of the service and their performance.[29] Nowhere else in the Talmud is the daily service treated at such length. However, we do find references to it scattered in

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[27] During a siege, the lambs may have been purchased from the attackers. An imaginative interpretation of some talmudic passages on this circumstance is found in Ernest Wiesenberg, "Related Prohibitions: Swine Breeding and the Study of Greek," *HUCA* 27 (1956): 213–33.

[28] The Gemara discusses the night-time arrangements mentioned in passing at the start of *m. Tamid*, relates a story about the origin of the process of random selection (repeated at *b. Yoma* 22a, cf., *m. Yoma* 2:1,2), conjectures that some details in the Mishnah, such as using a golden cup to water the lamb, are exaggerations (cf. *b. Hul.* 90b), and notes the that the different locations for the slaughter in the morning and afternoon services permitted facing the sun. An unrelated topic, a list of questions put by Alexander the Great to some sages, is also included.

[29] For example, the order in which the lamps are trimmed and the incense offered (*b. Yoma* 14a–15a, 33a–34b), or the parts of the sacrifice presented (25b), the arrangements for assigning duties (22a–25a), the number of priests involved (26b–29b), and the garments of the high priest on the Day of Atonement (31a, b). The accuracy of the depiction in the Mishnah tractate *Tamid* of the manner of sprinkling blood or the location of the rooms in the Temple is disputed (14b, 17a).

other tractates. For example, the later rabbis endorsed the tradition of the importance of the daily service. It was one of the few things whose duty of performance was held to override the requirements of the Sabbath or restrictions of uncleanness (*b. Yebam.* 5b, *b. Pesah* 66a, 77a, 81a).[30] Provision of its lambs took precedence over those for other festivals, even for the New Year ceremonies (*b. Menah.* 44a, b). The tractate *Berakhot* considers the worship service described in *m. Tamid* 5:1 (*b. Ber.* 11b–12a). This service included five prayers or benedictions of which the first is not identified. The tractate discusses these and gives various opinions as to the nature of the first prayer.

From the perspective of the study of the Tamid Psalms, the most important of the talmudic references appears in the tractate *Rosh HaShanah* 31a, where a rationale for the choice of the seven Tamid Psalms is presented. According to this scheme, the weekday psalms were selected for their relation to the seven days of creation. This explanation appears to align the psalms with the six daily readings from the creation story that took place in the daily devotionals practiced by those of the rostered course who were not present in Jerusalem. The Sabbath Psalm is given two explanations, one eschatological and the other not, the difference reflecting a debate between rabbis. The context in *b. Rosh HaSh.* is a discussion of questions of precedence in the recital of the Tamid Psalm on a festival day, when other psalms were also appointed.[31] The passage will be discussed in chapter 4, along with other explanations for the unity of the psalms.

Later rabbinic traditions link the sacrifice of the Tamid lamb with the Akedah, the binding (or sacrifice) of Isaac in Gen 22 (e.g., *Lev. Rab.* 2:11). The Tamid sacrifice is interpreted as atoning for sin, and derives its efficacy not directly but as a remembrance of the offering of Isaac.[32] This is a theological interpretation of the Tamid sacrifice recorded in a later period. To what extent was it present in the

[30] The Passover offering and circumcision were others. However, study of the Torah was considered more important (*b. ʿErub.* 63b, *Sanh.* 44a, b). See also n. 61.

[31] Other discussions of the interaction between the daily psalm and psalms appointed for a festival are found in *b. Sukkah* 47a, b; 54b; 55a.

[32] "According to ancient Jewish theology, the atoning efficacy of the Tamid offering, of all sacrifices in which a lamb was immolated, and perhaps of all expiatory sacrifices irrespective of the nature of the victim, depended on the virtue of

earlier time of the Second Temple? Certainly, there are some formal parallels between the two sacrifices (both are an *ʿolah* sacrifice, both involve binding), and there is evidence that the Tamid was, at least in some quarters, understood as expiatory (*Jub.* 6:14, see below). However, no documents from the earlier period explicitly indicate the dependence of one on the other.[33] The rabbinic traditions tended to attribute the efficacy of all major sacrifices to the Akedah. Such comprehensiveness smacks of later systematization. The focus on one act, the sacrifice, suggests some distance from the Tamid service as a ritual complex rich in experiential detail. The present study does not pursue the matter of the meaning of the slaughter *per se*, beyond noting the existence of a strong tradition that the sacrifice had an atoning function; rather, it restricts itself to the Tamid Psalms as a literary group and then considers them as part of the total complex of the Tamid ritual.[34]

1.4 *The Reliability of the Record in the Mishnah*

More serious than the matter of gaps in the Mishnaic record of the daily service is the question of the accuracy of that record. The same reasons that give rise to hesitation about the reliability of later rabbinic writings also apply to the Mishnah. The problem may be posed in general terms – How much credence can be placed on the evidence of the Mishnah for Jewish religious practices before 70 C.E.? – or in relation to tractate *Tamid* in particular – Within the Mishnah, how reliable is *Tamid* as a witness to the procedures of the morning service?

Until relatively recently the Mishnah was generally assumed to be a reliable witness to late Second Temple period Judaism, after allowance was made for stylistic features such as exaggeration or

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the Akedah, the self-offering of that Lamb whom God had recognized as the perfect victim of the perfect burnt offering" (Frédéric Manns, "The Binding of Isaac in Jewish Liturgy," in *The Sacrifice of Isaac in the Three Monotheistic Religions* [ed. Frédéric Manns; SBFA 41; Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1995], 64).

[33] This point is made forcefully by Philip R. Davies and Bruce D. Chilton as part of their argument that that the expiatory priority of the Akedah developed after the destruction of the Temple in response to Christian soteriology; see Davies and Chilton, "The Aqedah: A Revised Tradition History," *CBQ* 40 (1978): 514–46, esp. 518, 534–36.

[34] Atonement is a relatively minor part of the content of the seven psalms, see below, chs. 4 and 5.

contradiction. In the last few decades, doubts have surfaced. These have arisen from a new sensitivity to influence of the cultural and social environments on the redactors and compilers of the Mishnah.[35] The collection of the Mishnah stabilized in close to its current form at the end of the second century C.E., over a century after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, a century marked by strife and disruption throughout the Jewish homeland.[36] The conditions, it is argued, were not conducive to the accurate preservation of traditions, and the long lapse of time would have allowed plenty of opportunity for distortions to creep into the material. Moreover there is the matter of editorial intention. It is recognized that the redactors and compilers of the material that became the Mishnah operated with their own sets of aims; their intent was to address issues relevant to their communities, located in specific socio-historical contexts. Such contexts varied over time. At each stage, there could have been not only preservation, but also selection and transformation of the material. The tradents may not have aimed, as moderns might, at maintaining a complete historical record of the Temple cult, but of mediating their understanding of the Temple-ideal to their community.[37] At some points, solutions to inconsistencies in received material may have been introduced on an eisegetical rather than a historical basis. The final product, the Mishnah, is an alloy of preserved and transformed traditions melded together over more than a century. It thus should not be conceived of as accurately representing the views of one particular party, place or period.[38] Inasmuch

[35] Jacob Neusner has championed the view that the Mishnah witnesses only to the internal debates of Judaism following the failure of the first and second rebellions. His arguments and methodology have been presented in many works, e.g., Neusner, *Judaism: The Evidence of the Mishna* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 14–22.

[36] Strack and Stemberger, *Talmud and Midrash*, 119–66.

[37] Steven Fraade, in his study of the interactions and transformations of the multiple interpretations found in Sifre, makes the fundamental observation that rabbinic literature combines both transmission and transformation in order to mediate the text to the community; see Fraade, *From Tradition to Commentary: Torah and Its Interpretation in the Midrash Sifre to Deuteronomy* (SUNYSJ; Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1991). Rabbinic "texts not only transmit received traditions, from an earlier time, but simultaneously and often subtly transform – for purposes of their own place and program in time – what they seek to transmit" (69).

[38] Equally, the Mishnah, although it contains many voices, does not encompass all the diversity of Judaism after the destruction of the Temple. Apocalypticism, for instance, is absent; see Neusner, *Evidence*, 25–44.

as historical data appears in the tractates, it does so from the perspectives of the many redactors whose hands the documents passed through. Much may have been changed or omitted.

This perspective can lead easily into a position of maximal scepticism, from which the Mishnah is viewed as providing only information on some attitudes and debates within Judaism following the failure of the first and second revolts, possessing little value for the reconstruction of Second Temple practices.

The sceptical position, however, is too extreme. There is some evidence that the Mishnah has preserved teachings on religious law that reflect positions held prior to the destruction of the Temple.[39] The difficulty to be overcome in maintaining a middle position is methodological: How does one determine the accuracy of Mishnaic statements? In the absence of parallel confirmatory citations one might appeal to criteria such as internal consistency and external coherence. Is the tractate internally consistent or how much material must be excised to make it so? Does the tractate cohere with information in other sources or how much is called into question by external sources? Of course, the criteria of consistency and coherency operate most effectively to falsify a claim. The opposite move, from consistency to credibility, involves a certain amount of subjective scholarly judgment.

The tractate *Tamid* exhibits a high degree of internal consistency. Only a few dissenting opinions appear in the document (*m. Tamid* 3:2, 5:2, 7:2), and apart from two prominent exaggerations (*m. Tamid* 3:4, 8), the narrative is quite credible. Of course, the tractate has

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[39] For example, see the essays by Lawrence Schiffman and Joseph Baumgarten in Shemaryahu Talmon, ed., *Jewish Civilization in the Hellenistic-Roman Period* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1991), 138–46, 147–58. Further discussion can be found in Jeffrey L. Rubenstein, *The History of Sukkot in the Second Temple and Rabbinic Periods* (BJS 302; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 103–6. Magen Broshi has suggested that the tractate *Tamid* preserves some polemic against positions which were at one time held by members of the Qumran community and which remained alive after 70 C.E. Such a proposal supports a cautious optimism over the accuracy of the information in *m. Tamid*. For example, both the Qumran Psalms Scroll and tractate *Tamid* agree that psalms were sung at the daily service, although they do not agree on which psalms (the Psalms Scroll implies a different psalm for each day of the year; see 11QPs[a] 37, 4–6). See Magen Broshi, "Anti-Qumranic Polemics in the Talmud," in *The Madrid Qumran Congress: Proceedings of the International Congress on the Dead Sea Scrolls, Madrid, 18–21 March, 1991*. (ed. Julio Trebolle Barrera and Luis Vegas Montaner; *STDJ* 11; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 595–96.

some regrettable gaps – a description of an ordinary priest officiating at the sacrifice would be welcome – but the absence of items does not undermine the validity of what is described. On the contrary, too complete a description would give rise to suspicions of editorial augmentation.

The question of coherence with other works is more problematic. At several points the tractate contradicts information found elsewhere in the Mishnah. The contradictions, however, tend to concern relatively minor points of detail, such as the capacity of the ash jar or the route taken up the ramp by the high priest.[40] These are items that might well fall victim to confusion after several decades. On the other hand, the majority of items in the tractate have some form of external support. The Torah requires the performance of certain rituals on a daily basis – maintaining the altar and candlesticks, offering a lamb, incense, cakes for the high priest and so on. All these are mentioned in *m. Tamid*.[41] Other actions are necessary on practical grounds for the performance of these rituals – cleaning the altars, allotting tasks to the priests, opening the gates, etc. Virtually all the building blocks out of which the narrative in *m. Tamid* is composed can be well justified. In addition, the description in the tractate is supported by shorter descriptions found in Sirach and Josephus (see below). Any doubt then falls mostly on the sequence of events or their fine detail.[42]

The Tamid service was a public affair, celebrated in Jerusalem, but marked in some way all over the country. Since the service was conducted on behalf of all Israel, lay representatives of the people had to be present. These belonged to the *Maʿamad* associated with rostered course of priests and Levites. Their colleagues unable to

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[40] Contradictions include the route followed by priests who become defiled at night (*m. Tamid* 1:1 vs. *Mid.* 1:9), the side doors to the Sanctuary (*Tamid* 1:3 vs. *Mid.* 1:7), the number of fires on the altar (*Tamid* 2:4, 5 vs. *Yoma* 4:6), the distribution of the parts of the sacrifice (*Tamid* 3:1 vs. *Yoma* 3:3), the location of the chamber of the lambs (*Tamid* 3:3 vs. *Mid.* 1:6), the size of the ash-pan (*Tamid* 5:5 vs. *Yoma* 4:2), the order for tending the incense and candlestick (*Tamid* 6:1, 2 vs. *Yoma* 1:2), and the route taken up the ramp by the high priest (*Tamid* 7:3 vs. *Yoma* 4:5); see Ginzberg, "Tamid," 42–4. Of these, the discrepancy in the plan of the Temple is the most serious, but it does not materially affect the description of the ritual itself, which is the main concern here (*Tamid* 3:3 vs. *Mid.* 1:6).

[41] The biblical injunctions are listed in the notes to 2.1.1 above.

[42] Similarly E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 BCE–66 CE* (London: SCM, 1992), 507 n. 16.

attend met at home during the week at the time of the services. It is inconceivable that all these people would have been unaware of the elements of the ritual.[43] On the contrary, knowledge of the Tamid ritual would have been widespread among priests and laity. This situation would persist in following generations. If many people knew about the ritual, there would be less need and less opportunity for individuals to imaginatively explicate it.[44] The more widely known the ritual, the more likely that reliable information was preserved and so available to the redactors of the tractate.

In sum, leaving aside contradictory statements or those whose details may be explained on ideological grounds, tractate *m. Tamid* seems to offer credible information on the daily service.

Of particular interest in this study is the singing of the psalms. Did the Levites sing at the end of the worship as indicated in *m. Tamid* 7:3? Did they sing the psalms given in 7:4? The general considerations just discussed support the view that they did, that *m. Tamid* is a reliable witness on these public elements of the service. Three additional points bolster the accuracy of *m. Tamid* on this matter. First, there is ample biblical evidence that psalms formed a part of Temple worship in general and the daily service in particular (e.g., 1 Chr 16, 23:30–31). Second, the description in Sir 50 confirms that psalms were sung near the conclusion of the worship (see below). Third, evidence from the superscriptions of the Septuagint bears out the identification of the psalms given at the end of *m. Tamid*.[45]

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[43] Alfred Sendrey emphasizes a similar point for the role of the *Maʿamad* with regard to the knowledge of Temple music; see Sendrey, *Music in Ancient Israel* (London: Vision Press, 1969), 184–87. "The institution of the *ʾAnshe Maʿamad* cannot be overestimated in the matter of the dissemination and preservation of the Jewish sacred music" (187). What holds for music applies also to the rest of the ritual. "They brought back with them [from Jerusalem] the knowledge of the sacred routine and so, through their journey to Jerusalem twice a year, they helped to safeguard the tradition" (185).

[44] In this regard, it is interesting to note that the contradictions mostly concern elements that would have been marginal to the experience of the lay observers, such as details of the procedures in, or layout of, parts of the Temple frequented only by priests.

[45] The identification of the daily psalms will be discussed in detail in section 5 below. Another, unrelated issue concerns the short worship liturgy (*m. Tamid* 5:1). There is no biblical evidence for this ritual. It disrupts the flow of the description of the morning worship. The named prayers are suspiciously parallel to those in the synagogue service. Did this liturgy form part of the morning rituals at all, or is it in part or in whole a later construction, modelled along the lines of synagogue

Before leaving the discussion of tractate *m. Tamid*, a few words should be said about its dating. The Mishnah is a product of a long period of composition and redaction, extending before and after the activity of its compiler, R. Judah, at the end of the second century. For most tractates, it is uncertain where in this continuum of authorship one should place the point of generation of a document. Nevertheless, some have attempted this for tractate *m. Tamid*.

In an influential article, Louis Ginzberg concluded that *m. Tamid* was the earliest tannaitic tractate, dating from shortly after the fall of Jerusalem.[46] This early dating received widespread support, even when other of Ginzberg's conclusions about *m. Tamid* were rejected.[47] At their core, arguments for the early date of *m. Tamid* rely on the peculiar style and language of the tractate, which are named "archaic." More recently, this inference has come under attack. Differences in language, it is observed, do not necessarily conform to differences in chronology.[48] On the basis of content, Jacob Neusner has proposed

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practices? The matter is beyond the scope of the present study. For a recent discussions of this liturgy, see Reuven Hammer, "What Did They Bless? A Study of Mishnah Tamid 5.1," *JQR* 81 (1991): 305–24; Daniel K. Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (*STDJ* 27; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 47–50, 56. Both assume without comment that the ritual existed roughly as described in *m. Tamid*. One might also entertain doubts about other procedures which were not carried out in public view, for which no biblical warrant is known, but for which there are parallels in Hellenistic practices, e.g., the final watering of the lamb before slaughter; see Saul Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine: Studies in the Literary Transmission Beliefs and Manners of Palestine in the 1 Century B.C.E.–IV Century C.E.* (TS 18; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1962), 149–51.

[46] According to Ginzberg, *Tamid* was not part of the Mishnah as compiled by R. Judah at the end of the second century, but had been preserved independently alongside the Mishnaic tractates by the early rabbis, who had also left it largely untouched. His arguments were based on language, the peculiar form of *Tamid*, which implied it was distinct from the rest of the Mishnah, and some rabbinic references associating a work called *Tamid* with one R. Simon of Mizpah, whom he dated around 70 C.E. He also provided an extensive list of later redactional alterations to *Tamid*. See Ginzberg, "Tamid," passim.

[47] For example, Brody rejected many of Ginzberg's observations on the composition and redactional history of *Tamid* and its independence from the Mishnah, but tended to an early dating on linguistic and stylistic grounds; see Brody, *Traktat Tamid*, 5–10. An early dating is also maintained by Arnost Z. Ehrman, "Tamid," *EncJud* 15:786, and by Y. N. Epstein, as reported in Neusner, "Dating a Mishnah Tractate: The Case of Tamid," in *History, Religion, and Spiritual Democracy: Essays in Honor of Joseph L. Blau* (ed. Maurice Wohlgelernter; New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 98.

[48] H. J. Blumberg, "Saul Lieberman on Talmud of Caesarea and Louis Ginzberg on Mishnah Tamid," in *The Formation of the Babylonian Talmud: Studies in the Achievements of Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Historical and Literary-Critical Research* (ed. Jacob

a date of around 140 C.E.[49] Currently the question of dating *m. Tamid* is open.

The implications of such uncertainty need to be kept in perspective. The date of composition of a work does not necessarily correlate with the historical accuracy of the work. The oft-implicit equation of earlier with more reliable is not warranted. A later work may present historical details more accurately than an earlier one. If, as was argued before, knowledge of the Tamid ritual was widespread due to the level of public participation in activities associated with the daily service, then a late date for the tractate is neither unreasonable nor damaging to its credibility. No need would have been felt to record well-known events of the daily service until after the failure of the second revolt, when it became clear that rebuilding the Temple was not imminent. Then the common pool of memory was drawn upon. The wide extent of this pool would have reduced opportunities for distortions in the account of the ritual. Speculation on the date of composition is independent of the reliability of the tractate.

1.5 *Other Descriptive Texts*

Mishnah Tractate *Tamid* contains the fullest description of the ritual complex performed at the Tamid service. In addition to this tractate, there are some other descriptions of the service that tend to confirm the details in *m. Tamid*.

Sirach contains a section in praise of the high priest Simon that closes with a description of his performance of an unidentified sacrifice (Sir 50:5–21). The high priest is probably Simon I (early third century) but may be Simon II (late third and early second century).[50]

Neusner; StPB 17; Leiden: Brill, 1970), 107–24, esp. 111. Blumberg accepts Ginzberg's observations on the style and emendations to the text, but rejects his arguments relating to dating.

[49] Neusner, "Dating Tamid," 97–113. Neusner carried Blumberg's critique further, arguing that the peculiarities in language and style found in *m. Tamid* also appear in other places of the Mishnah, and concluding that these represent a particular type (*Gattung*) of Mishnaic writing. As for dating the tractate, he mounts a scathing attack on Ginzberg's handling of rabbinic sources, which, if anything, he argues, show that R. Simon did not write *m. Tamid*! He arrives at his preferred date for the tractate on the basis of the interaction of some of the unattested sayings in *m. Tamid* with attested (and therefore datable) sayings in other tractates.

[50] James C. Vanderkam, "Simon the Just: Simon I or Simon II?," in *From Revelation*

Although the ceremony in question often has been taken to be one of the rituals observed on the Day of Atonement, the description better fits the Tamid service.[51] The account in Sirach concerns itself with elements of the ritual seen by the public, the exit of the high priest from the sanctuary, the burnt offering, drink offering, singing and blessing. It also describes, at length, the magnificent appearance of the high priest in his robes and mentions the sounding of trumpets and responses of the people.[52] Although it differs from *m. Tamid* at a few points, the divergences are relatively minor and, for the most part, the passage corroborates the outline in the Mishnah.[53] In particular, it confirms that there was a tradition of singing a psalm at the close of the service. The reference to the crowd who bow, pray and shout at the end of the service further indicates a public audience for the ritual, perhaps extending well beyond the *Maʿamad*.

The *Letter of Aristeas* includes a report of the visit of Aristeas to Jerusalem for the purpose of assembling translators for the LXX.[54] As

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to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature (JSJS 62; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 224–40; repr. from *Pomegranates and Golden Bells: Studies in Biblical, Jewish, and Near Eastern Ritual, Law, and Literature in Honor of Jacob Milgrom* (ed. D. P. Wright, D. N. Freedman and A. Hurwitz; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 303–18.

[51] The case for identifying the service as Tamid has been ably argued by Fearghas O. Fearghail, "Sir 50, 5–21: Yom Kippur or the Daily Whole-Offering?," *Bib* 59 (1978): 301–16. A summary can be found in the commentary of Patrick W. Skehan and Alexander A. Di Lella, *The Wisdom of Ben Sira: A New Translation with Notes* (AB 39; New York: Doubleday, 1987), 550–54.

[52] The existence of the account implies that the high priest regularly performed the Tamid service at the time of Simon (I or II). Further, he wore the gold robes (cf. *m. Yoma* 3:4). The information also gives a new twist to the puzzle of the high priest's participation in the Tamid service. According to Josephus, for over a century the high priestly robes were sequestered by the civil rulers, including Herod and the Roman governors (*Ant.* 18.90–95). This would preclude frequent celebration of the Tamid by the high priest. The attention given to the high priest in the later rabbinical accounts may thus preserve an older, indeed much older, tradition, attested to by Sirach and possibly Aristeas (see below).

[53] Differences occur, for example, in the blessing, which, in particular, Sirach places after the singing, and in a lack of reference to the incense offering. Fearghail argues for the accuracy of *m. Tamid* on these points ("Sir 50, 5–21"). It is possible that the service changed in the centuries after the high priesthood of Simon.

[54] The date of composition is uncertain, perhaps late second century B.C.E. The material on the Temple may have been borrowed from an earlier source, Hecateus of Abdera (fourth century). For background on the letter, see George W. E. Nickelsburg, "Stories of Biblical and Early Post-Biblical Times," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (ed. Michael E. Stone; CRINT 2/2; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1984), 75–80. For a positive re-evaluation of the reliability of Aristeas's story of the translation of

part of this, there is a description of a ritual performed in the Temple by the high priest (*Ep. Arist.* 96–101). Although Aristeas does not identify the service in question, it might well be a Tamid service. Indeed, given the apologetic nature of the letter, his silence most likely confirms that the occasion was not a special one, else it would have been identified, and so it was probably a routine daily service (morning or evening). As in Sir 50, the high priest is officiating at the ritual and his rich costume is described in detail.[55] The attendance of Aristeas and his party at the service is another indication of the presence of a lay audience, including pious "tourists."

At various points in his writings, Josephus makes mention of the daily rituals of his religion. The ritual is described briefly in *Ant.* 3.237–238. The account is, for the most part, in agreement with the details found in the biblical texts and the Mishnah, although less complete than *m. Tamid*.[56]

2. *Prescriptive Texts for the Tamid Ritual*

Pentateuchal regulations that command the performance of the Tamid are found in Exodus and Numbers. Exod 29:38–43 prescribes that a service is to take place in the morning (בבקר) and afternoon/evening (בן הערבים). A list of ingredients is also given: each service requires

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the Pentateuch, see Nina Collins, *The Library in Alexandria and the Bible in Greek* (VTSup 82; Leiden: Brill, 2000).

[55] Aristeas expresses surprise that the high priest was officiating (*Ep. Arist.* 96). This could be a rhetorical device or an indication that by the time the document was composed, the involvement of the high priest in the daily service had decreased. Since the high priest would have been expected to officiate at a special festival, the note of surprise adds to the likelihood that the service was the common Tamid. The description, however, does not mention the singing of psalms and it may be that all the author has in mind is an occasion when the high priest was doing duty like any ordinary priest, sacrificing alongside his colleagues.

[56] Other daily activities recorded by Josephus include the offering of incense and preparation of oil (*Ant.* 3.199), the lampstand that burns continually (*Ant.* 8.90), twice daily prayer (*Ant.* 4.212) and offerings for the Emperor (*Ag. Ap.* 2.77, *J.W.* 2.197, 409–410). Josephus does not refer to the Tamid service when he presents the story of the consecration of the Tabernacle (*Ant.* 3.237–38) or the sacrifices at the feast of Tabernacles (*Ant.* 3.204–226). He includes the information that the Levites sang from scrolls until 65 C.E., when they were permitted to sing from memory (*Ant.* 20.216–18) and reports that the change over of the priestly courses happened in the middle of the Sabbath day (*Ag. Ap.* 2.108). Josephus is likely to be accurate on the details of the Temple rituals; he was a priest and had plans to write a volume about Temple worship (*J.W.* 5.237, 247).

one lamb and cakes made from one tenth of a measure (presumably an ephah) of flour (סלת) mixed with one quarter of a hin of oil (שמן כתית). The burnt offering is accompanied by a drink offering (נסך) of one quarter of a hin of wine (יין). An associated daily activity is also listed in Exod 30:7–8, which commands that incense be offered each morning and evening. The Mishnah tractate *Tamid* includes this incense offering as part of the daily service (*m. Tamid* 5:3). Numbers 28:1–8 is a list of requirements for the daily offering that parallels Exod 29:38–43. The prescriptions agree quite closely with those in Exodus, but not exactly.[57] The two sets of regulations leave a lot of latitude for the performance of the ritual, even when other prescriptions on the procedure for wine, grain and whole offerings are taken into account. There is no mention of the performance of a psalm at the service.

The regulations for Tamid in Numbers form part of a sequence of prescriptions for holy days which extends to the end of chapter 29. For each of these days there is a formulaic reference that the offering for the festival is to be in addition to the "regular burnt offering" (עלת התמיד). The language in this list exhibits some puzzling inconsistencies.[58] However, it is quite clear that the Tamid service is to be performed every day, regardless of the other requirements of the day. The Tamid service is the primary ritual of the cult, preceding all others.

Prescriptions concerning the Tamid service occur elsewhere in the canonical biblical material outside the Pentateuch. According to the Chronicler, the practice of singing psalms at the service, something not mentioned in Numbers or Exodus, is based on a command of David (1 Chr 23:30–31).

The only reference to Tamid in the prophetic literature is a short prescription in Ezek 46:13–15, where the ruler (הנשׂיא) is ordered to provide the requirements for the service every morning (v. 15, בבקר בבקר עולת תמיד). The quantities prescribed for the ritual differ from those in Exodus and Numbers and there is no mention of a drink offering.[59] More striking is the absence of any edict concerning an

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[57] The accompanying drink offering is שכר (beer). The cakes are מנחה.

[58] See n. 80.

[59] Walther Zimmerli explains the variation in the quantities as arising from the amalgamation of the amounts for the morning and afternoon grain offerings in preexilic practice. If this were the case, then simple subtraction of the amounts given

afternoon Tamid. According to Ezekiel, there is to be only one daily burnt offering, namely, in the morning. This seems to be at variance with preexilic practice and certainly with postexilic.[60]

Funding for the service is also of concern in Neh 10:33–34 (= 10:32–33 NRSV). Here the people undertake to pay a tax of one third of a shekel to cover the cost of Temple sacrifices, including the Tamid. This prescription is contrary to that of Ezekiel, who places responsibility for the service on the authorities. Rabbinic literature also exhibits confusion over the source of the funds (*m. Sheqal.* 4:1; *b. Menah.* 65a). In some texts, a ruler is said to have underwritten the service (2 Chr 13:11; 1 Esdr 4:42; *Ant.* 19.331).

Jubilees legislates a perpetual twice daily sacrifice for atonement for Israel as part of the covenant with Noah (*Jub.* 6:14). No details of the sacrifice are given, other than that concerning the disposal of the blood. Another passage indicates that the only activities on the Sabbath were to be the Sabbath sacrifice, the offering of incense and the regular Tamid service (*Jub.* 50:10–11).[61]

The Temple Scroll from Qumran contains a damaged section that appears to be legislation for the Tamid service (11QT XIII, 11a–16). What can be read agrees with the prescriptions in biblical material.[62]

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in Exodus or Numbers from Ezekiel's quantities shows that the evening grain offering required one fifteenth of an ephah of flour and one twelfth of a hin of oil – unusual amounts for a biblical ritual! Also, a (double sized) wine offering would be expected. Zimmerli further argues that vv. 13–15 are an addition to Ezekiel's list of prescriptions in ch. 46, motivated by the lack of a reference to the daily service elsewhere. See Zimmerli, *Ezekiel: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel* (trans. James D. Martin; 2 vols.; Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 2:488–93.

[60] The reason may be theological. In Ezek 8:16, a vision of heterodox worship of the rising sun in the Temple climaxes a tour of the abominations in the Temple. The prescription for a morning Tamid counteracts this practice. On the theological basis for the requirements in Ezek 40–48, see Walther Zimmerli, "Plans for Rebuilding after the Catastrophe of 587," in *I Am Yahweh* (trans. Douglas W. Stott; Atlanta: John Knox, 1982), 111–33, 156–60. On the other hand, Ezekiel may be advocating the restoration of an older practice; see Phillip M. Sherman, "'Laws That Were Not Good': Ezekiel 40–48 and the Rejection of the Holiness School" (M.Div. Thesis, Candler School of Theology, 2000), 114–15.

[61] Almost all documents indicate that the Tamid service was performed on the Sabbath. There is one reference in the sectarian Zadokite fragment that appears to reject this (CD-A XI, 17–18). See Lawrence H. Schiffman, *The Halakhah at Qumran* (SJLA 16; Leiden: Brill, 1975), 128–29; idem "Sacrificial System," 220–21; Johann Maier, *The Temple Scroll: An Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (JSOTSup 34; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 77.

[62] A missing section from line 13 was restored by Yigael Yadin on the basis of Lev 7:8 as a command that the hide of the lamb belonged to the priest who offered

The Tamid sacrifice is the first in a long list of festivals (11QT XIII–XXXIX). It is stated in some places that the festival rituals were performed in addition to the Tamid sacrifice, as in Num 28–29 (e.g., 11QT XVII, 6; XXIII, 8; XXV, 7).[63] The War Scroll, 1QM II, 1–10 corroborates the tradition mentioned in the Mishnah that lay Israelites were present at the sacrifice as one component of the rostered courses.[64]

3. *References to the Tamid in Non-Ritual Texts*

There are many non-ritual texts which contain a reference to the Tamid service but for which the service itself is not a major focus of interest. In these cases, reference to Tamid supports another point in the text. For convenience, these texts are organized into four groups, Tamid as a marker of time, as an example of piety, as part of the cult and as epitomizing the cult. These divisions are indicators of a role played by the reference to Tamid in its context, but do not form well-defined or exclusive categories.[65]

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the sacrifice. In fact, the fate of the skin of the Tamid lamb is one of the small puzzles surrounding the Tamid service. None of the surviving materials indicates what happened to it. In the usual *ʿolah* sacrifice, all of the animal was burnt on the altar, except for the skin, which was kept by the officiating priest (Lev 7:8). It would be reasonable that this practice also held for Tamid, but a conjectural restoration is not enough to prove this. Yadin's restoration is not included in the recent edition of Elisha Qimron. See Yadin, *The Temple Scroll.* Vol. 2. *Text and Commentary* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1983), 54–55; Lawrence H. Schiffman, "The Sacrificial System of the Temple Scroll and the Book of Jubilees," in *SBL Seminar Papers, 1985* (*SBLSP* 24; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 219–20; Qimron, *The Temple Scroll: A Critical Edition with Extensive Reconstructions* with a Bibliography by Florentino Garcia Martinez (JDS; Beer Sheva: Ben-Gurion Univeristy, 1996), 22.

[63] The Passover sacrifice is put before the evening Tamid in 11QT XVII, 6, contra *m. Pesah.* 5:1. Fragmentary references to the Tamid service also occur elsewhere, in the *War Scroll*, 4Q493 14; the *Ritual of Marriage*, 4Q502 27, 2; the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 4Q403 1 I, 22.

[64] The passage in question is missing from a (early?) version of the *War Scroll*, 4Q471 I. This does not rule out the possibility that the practice was followed at the time of composition of the early version; the author of that version may not have felt the need to mention it. See Esther Eshel and Hanan Eshel, "4Q471 Fragment I and Maʿamadot in the War Scroll," in Trebolle Barrera and Vegas Montaner, *The Madrid Qumran Congress*, 611–20.

[65] For example, verses that associate Tamid with the cult may also imply that its performance is an example of piety, e.g., Ezra 3:1–7; *J.W.* 1.148–150.

3.1 *Tamid as a marker of time*

A morning service is used as a marker of time of day only once in the Hebrew Bible, in 2 Kgs 3:20. Mention of an afternoon service as the time at which a certain event took place occurs in 1 Kgs 18:29, 36; Ezra 9:4, 5; Dan 9:21 and Jdt 9:1.[66] The term used in these places, however, is מנחה, not תמיד (cf. 2 Kgs 16:16; Ps 141:2).[67] Josephus alters the time stamps in 2 Kgs 3:20 and 1 Kgs 18:29, 36 to sunrise and midday (*Ant.* 8.340; 9.37, 39).

3.2 *Tamid as an example of piety*

Occasionally, a contribution towards the Tamid Service is mentioned in a way that indicates it is to be interpreted as a mark of piety. These references mostly illustrate the behavior of rulers – Abijah (2 Chron 13:11), Hezekiah (2 Chr 31:3), Darius (1 Esdr 4:52) and Agrippa (*Ant.* 19.331), cf. Jehoiada (2 Chr 24:14).[68] In Ps 141:2 the afternoon sacrifice is a metaphor for personal piety.

Philo discusses the Tamid service in his treatment of the Jewish laws (*Spec. Laws* 1.168–171, 198–199, 276; 2.42). His interest is more on the interpretation of the ritual than its description and in the latter he agrees with the Pentateuchal legislation. The service is explained as a thank offering (*Spec. Laws* 1.168–171). He interprets it as symbolizing the ideal of a life lived continuously in virtue without the intrusion of vice (*Spec. Laws* 2.42). However, the incense offering, which he takes as preceding the sacrifice, is the more important ritual, since the purity of spirit it symbolizes is more important than the quantity of sacrificial victims (*Spec. Laws* 1.276).

Josephus records that the daily sacrifices for the Emperor and Roman people were a mark of loyalty, whose cessation contributed

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[66] Even when apparently functioning as a marker of the time of day, a reference to the Tamid might carry other implications. For example, in 1 Kgs 18, the prophets of Baal pray to their god up until the time of the afternoon Tamid service, at which point, Elijah initiates a burnt offering that brings about the cessation of their worship. In addition to its temporal function in this text, the reference to the Tamid also connotes a ritual that closes the worship of the day, for the prophets of Baal rather dramatically and finally.

[67] In Judith, τὸ θυμίαμα τῆς ἑσπέρας ἐκείνης rather than the usual Septuagintal terms (either διὰ παντὸς or based on the root ἐνδελεχ-, see n. 82), cf. 4:14.

[68] On the other hand, Artaxerxes is said to have imposed a tax on the Tamid lamb (*Ant.* 11.297).

to the outbreak of hostilities in 66 C.E. (*Ag. Ap.* 2.77; *J.W.* 2.197, 409–410).

3.3 *Tamid as part of the cult*

In some texts, the Tamid service is recognized as one of the rituals of the cult among others, but it is not described in detail.

In 2 Kgs 16, there is a description of the replacement, under Ahaz, of the bronze altar of sacrifice at the Temple by a new one styled along foreign lines. The king commanded that morning and evening sacrifices be performed on this altar (v. 15).

According to the Chronicler, David left a group of priests at Gibeon with the Tabernacle to perform morning and evening sacrifices regularly there (1 Chr 16:40). As noted before, psalms were sung at these services (1 Chr 23:30–31). The Tamid service is later included in Solomon's letter to Hiram as one of a list of rituals to be performed in the new Temple (2 Chr 2:3). The story of the restoration of worship after the exile includes a similar list (Ezra 3:1–7; 1 Esdr 5:51).

In the Qumran Psalms Scroll, it is stated that David wrote 364 psalms for the Tamid offering, one for each day of the year (11QPs^{a} XXVII, 4–6). If nothing else, this statement is evidence for the liturgical practice of performing a psalm at the Tamid service, in this case with the psalm chosen from a fixed *annual* cycle and varying Sabbath psalm.

Both Sirach and Josephus explain that the performance of a twice daily Tamid was part of the duties of the high priest (Sir 45:14; *Ag. Ap.* 2.105).[69]

In the story of Judith, some of the despair felt at the threat posed by Holofernes is captured in the statement that the priests wore sackcloth and ashes while performing the Tamid (Jdt 4:14). Their apparel contrasts with the magnificent appearance of the high priest in Sirach and Aristeas.

3.4 *Tamid as the epitome of the cult*

The importance attached to regular performance of the Tamid Service is attested to by certain references in historiographical contexts. In

[69] Cf. Lev 9:17. Exod 40:29 and Lev 3:5 may also refer to the Tamid offering; see Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 1–16* (AB 3A; New York: Doubleday, 1991), 208, 584.

these texts, the Tamid service is portrayed as the central element in the worship of Yahweh.

The first example is found in the story of the oppression under Antiochus IV Epiphanes. In Daniel, a reference to the service as התמיד occurs five times (Dan 8:11, 12, 13; 11:31; 12:11). The context is always that of the disruption of the orthodox worship of God in the Temple. This state is characterized by the profanation of the sanctuary, handing over the "host" (צבא), cessation of the Tamid, and installation of the "abomination of desolation."[70] From the perspective of the second part of Daniel, the daily service epitomizes the pious worship of God and the sacred relationship established through that worship.[71]

Josephus also includes cessation of the Tamid as one of the atrocities carried out by Antiochus (*J.W.* 1.32; *Ant.* 12.251, 254, cf. *J.W.* 1.39; *Ant.* 12.316). The behavior of the Syrian can be contrasted with that of Pompey, whose capture of the city did not interrupt the sequence of Tamid rituals but who, on the contrary, ordered the afternoon Tamid to be performed the same day he captured the city (*J.W.* 1.148, 153). Josephus also paints a picture of the priests continuing to perform the ritual despite the battle raging around them (*J.W.* 1.148–150; *Ant.* 14.65–68). Their regard for the ritual exceeded concern for their personal safety. The final episode in Josephus's references to the Tamid service is placed at the end of the Roman siege in 70 C.E. The twice daily service had, according to Josephus, been continued for the length of the siege. (This itself is testimony

[70] Johan Lust, "Cult and Sacrifice in Daniel: The Tamid and the Abomination of Desolation," in *Ritual and Sacrifice in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the International Conference organized by the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven from the 17th to the 20th of April 1991* (ed. Jan Quaegebeur; OLA 55; Louvain: Uitgeverij Peeters en Departement Oriëntalistiek, 1993), 283–99, esp. 283–85.

[71] This is true for the MT. In the LXX the technical term התמיד is rendered by the less narrow ἡ θυσία, at 8:11 (plus τὰ ἀπ᾽ αἰῶνος, but this is not a standard term for the Tamid service), 8:12, 13 and 11:31, while in 12:11 it is ἡ θυσία διὰ παντὸς (with the inconsistency suggesting the possibility of an explanatory emendation). The result is less emphasis on the Tamid service in the LXX than in the MT. While this may indicate a lower status for the Tamid in the eyes of the creators of LXX Daniel, it may reflect the opposite – that the continuity of the Tamid was too important to allow for the open admission that once it was interrupted. Similarly the books of Maccabees use the term θυσία (1 Macc 1:45; 4:52–53; 2 Macc 10:3). The Temple is desecrated by the abomination of desolation but the cessation of the daily service is not mentioned (1 Macc 1:54).

to the importance of the Tamid ritual, since the siege had been accompanied – so Josephus tells – by a food shortage that led to the defenders committing atrocities within their own ranks.) When the service ceased, the morale of the defenders collapsed (*J.W.* 6.94).[72] The city fell soon thereafter. While some allowance must be made for exaggeration on the part of Josephus, it is hard to imagine he could have made so much of the continuation or disruption of the Tamid service if the ritual had not already occupied a place of prominence in the religious affections of the majority of Jews in the first century C.E.

4. *The History of the Tamid Service*

References to the daily service in Pentateuchal legislation and historical material indicate that the Tamid ritual had a long history in Israel. Reconstruction of this history is of peripheral concern in the present study since the primary interest lies in late Second Temple practices. Nevertheless a few comments will be made.[73]

In the late Second Temple period, in accord with Pentateuchal traditions, the afternoon service required the offering of a lamb. However, there are sufficiently many references to a grain offering (מנחה) in the afternoon that it is plausible that the lamb was an innovation that replaced an offering of cakes.[74] This change may have occurred early in the postexilic period. In this case, the reference in 2 Kgs 16:16 is to be taken as indicating the true nature of the service and Ezekiel is being pedantically correct in referring to only one daily offering of a lamb (46:13–15).[75] Against this view, it can

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[72] Loyal Josephus took the opportunity to address the defenders in a prophetic style, pointing out to them that in the eyes of God, the cessation of the Tamid was their responsibility and would surely result in their destruction (*J.W.* 6.95–110).

[73] The topic has been covered by others, e.g., Roland deVaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (trans. John McHugh; London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1961; repr., Biblical Resource Series; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 468–69; Rolf Rendtorff, *Studien zur Geschichte des Opfers im alten Israel* (WMANT 24; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener-Verlag, 1967), 74–76, 196. De Vaux states the Tamid service was of postexilic origin, whereas Rendtorff argues for a preexilic morning service. See also Milgrom, *Leviticus* 1–16, 456–57.

[74] מנחה (ה)ערב in 2 Kgs 16:16; Ezra 9:4, 5; Dan 9:21; Ps 141:2; עלות מנחה in 1 Kgs 18:29, 36; מנחה התמיד in Neh 10:33; cf. Jdt 9:1.

[75] At the other extreme, in Daniel the use of מנחה may be a deliberate archaism, or reflect a popular name for the service which preserved a memory of its earlier

be argued that while מנחה is a technical term for a grain offering in the cultic material of the priestly document P, in other contexts it can refer to any form of offering or a secular gift.[76] In this case, no conclusion can be drawn about the evolution of the sacrifice from the references to a מנחה outside the Pentateuch. The term may merely reflect an alternative, popular name for the afternoon Tamid and not the type of offering presented. The sacrifice of a lamb may have been part of the early form of the afternoon service

The service is known by a variety of names in the Bible. By the late Second Temple period, the short form התמיד had become the generic title for the regular daily offerings (cf. Daniel and the name of the Mishnah tractate on the service).[77] The term תמיד(ה) also occurs in other, earlier biblical works, not alone, but in conjunction with עלה.[78] There are also several places where the service is known simply by the time of its performance.[79] The simplest explanation of these data is that the earliest title was no more than a reference to the time of the service. However, the term תמיד also came to be associated with the sacrifice, since that was a description of its nature. Eventually, it displaced the time reference and became the name of the service, "The Tamid."

This simple explanation does not fully account for all of the data on the name of the service. Several different forms of reference to Tamid occur in Num 28–29. Perhaps these chapters preserve two stages, an earlier one, where the service was referred to by תמיד without the article (Num 28:1–8, cf. Ezek 46:15) and an intermediate stage, when the article was added, but the reference to the offering as עלה retained (Num 28:9–29:38).[80] Neh 10:33 might also reflect

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form. The references in Ezra and Nehemiah are ambiguous as those works are too close to the point of change.

[76] Gary A. Anderson, "Sacrifice and sacrificial offerings (OT)," *ABD* 5:874–75. Alfred Marx, *Les Offrandes Végétales dans L'Ancient Testament: Du Tribut D'Hommage au Repas Eschatologique* (VTSup 57; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 12–28. Marx stresses the centrality of the grain offering in the daily service as a symbol of God's support for Israel (92–95). This would also explain the use of מנחה as an alternative name for the service.

[77] However, ערב(ה) מנחה was an alternate name for the afternoon service.

[78] Exod 29:42; Num 28–29 (16 times); Ezek 46:15; Neh 10:33; and possibly Ezra 3:5.

[79] ערב/בקר plus עלה in Lev 9:17; Num 28:23; 2 Kgs 16:16; 1 Chr 16:40; 2 Chr 2:3; 13:11; 31:3; Ezra 3:3.

[80] The dual reference in Num 28:23 could be an explanatory gloss, intended to

the transitional usage. Chronicles, although late, refers to the Tamid service by means of the time of its performance.[81] Rather than a simple scheme of evolution of the name of the service, it seems as if several names persisted in use for long periods of time.[82]

5. *The Identification of the Tamid Psalms*

The Mishnah tractate *Tamid* gives a complete list of the daily psalms and the days on which they were used (*m. Tamid* 7:4), namely, Sunday: Ps 24, Monday: Ps 48, Tuesday: Ps 82, Wednesday: Ps 94, Thursday: Ps 81, Friday: Ps 93, and Saturday: Ps 92. This list no doubt preserves an old tradition, but how old? What other ancient sources identify the psalms for the days of the week? What date can be associated with these sources, thereby shedding light on the inception of the usage of these psalms?

The primary scriptural evidence for identification of the psalms that were in daily use in the late Second Temple Period comes from the superscriptions of the psalms themselves, as they are found in different ancient versions of the Psalter.[83]

In the tradition preserved in the MT, only one psalm has a superscription that indicates the psalm is for use on a specific day of the week. Psalm 92 is headed, "A Psalm. A Song for the Sabbath."[84]

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equate the terms עלת הבקר and עלת התמיד; see Rendtorff, *Geschichte des Opfers*, 74–75. The sequence of references to the daily sacrifice in Num 28:9–29:38 exhibits peculiar variations with respect to prepositions and the number and gender of the nouns and their suffixes, suggesting that the two chapters must have a complicated redactional history.

[81] Furthermore, although the Chronicler uses תמיד in these contexts, it is as an adverb, not a proper noun (1 Chr 16:40; 2 Chr 2:3; cf. 2 Chr 24:14). This suggests that he does not recognize עלת (ה)תמיד as a name for the service. Either he does not know the terminology, or he has chosen to avoid it deliberately.

[82] In the LXX, תמיד is almost invariably translated by διὰ παντὸς, the most common exception being references to the daily service. In that case, the terms ἐνδελεχισμός or ἐνδελεχῶς are frequently (but not always) used. Josephus, however, only uses ὁ ἐνδελεχισμός in two places and in both cases indicates it is a technical term, *J.W.* 1.94; *Ant.* 2. 76–77, see also *J. W.* 1.32, 34. More frequently, he uses a vague term, such as καθ' ἡμέρας or καθημερινός, e.g., *J.W.* 1.148; *Ant.* 3.237–8; 11.297; 12.251, 14.65, cf., *J.W.* 2.197; *Ant.* 3.199; 4.212; 8.90; 12.254, 316; 19.331; *Ag. Ap.* 2.77, 105, 108.

[83] The numbering of the psalms and their verses found in the MT will be used throughout even when this differs from that of other versions or translations, such as the LXX or NRSV.

[84] מזמור שׁיר ליום השׁבת

A note of caution must be sounded with regard to the importance of this first piece of evidence. Since the discovery of the library at Qumran, it has become apparent that there was considerable variation in psalms collections in the late Second Temple period. It cannot be assumed that what is now the MT Psalter was dominant, or even widely influential. Indeed, a strong case can be made that the Psalter as it now stands was the product of a long period of evolution and that the last two books may not have stabilized (in contents, order, or superscriptions) until well into the first century C.E. Consequently, one must be wary about ascribing more significance to the evidence of the MT over that of other versions.

No superscription in the psalms scroll fragments from the Qumran library indicates its psalm is for daily use.[85] This may be due to quirks of time and decay. However, if worship at Qumran differed from Jerusalem in following an annual, rather than a weekly, cycle of daily psalms, as 11QPs^{a} XVII, 5–6 suggests, then it is not altogether surprising that daily psalms are not identified. Since the rituals of the Qumran community often differed from those in the central sanctuary, use of an annual cycle at Qumran does not provide information about the date of inauguration of the weekly cycle in the Temple.

The LXX is the third major witness for identification of the Tamid Psalms. In the Göttingen edition of the LXX Psalter prepared by Alfred Rahlfs, five psalms are associated with days of the week through the superscriptions included by Rahlfs in the body of the text.[86] These are Ps 24 (LXX Ps 23), Ps 48 (LXX Ps 47), Ps 94 (LXX Ps 93), Ps 93 (LXX Ps 92), and Ps 92 (LXX Ps 91).[87] For a sixth psalm, Ps 81 (LXX

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[85] The superscriptions are listed in Peter W. Flint, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms* (*STDJ* 17; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 117–34. Roger T. Beckwith attempted to link all the psalms in the Qumran Psalms Scroll to a weekday. See further, ch. 5.2.3.

[86] Alfred Rahlfs, *Psalmi Cum Odis* (Septuaginta: VTG; Auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Gottingensis editum 10; 2d ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967). The edition is acknowledged as an important contribution to Psalms scholarship, despite its weaknesses. For reviews, see P. L. Hedley, "The Göttingen Investigation and Edition of the Septuagint," *HTR* 26 (1933): 57–72, and Albert Pietersma, "The Present State of the Critical Text of the Greek Psalter," in *Der Septuaginta-Psalter und seine Tochterübersetzungen* (ed. Anneli Aejmelaeus and Udo Quast; AAWG: Philologisch-historische Klasse, 3/230; MSU 24; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 12–32.

[87] Ps 24:1, ψαλμὸς τῷ Δαυιδ τῆς μιᾶς σαββάτων; Ps 48:1, ψαλμὸς ᾠδῆς τοις υἱοῖς Κορε δευτέρᾳ σαββάτου; Ps 94:1, ψαλμὸς τῷ Δαυιδ τετράδι σαββάτων; Ps 93:1, εἰς

Ps 80), the apparatus gives an alternative reading for the superscription, which includes a reference to a weekday.[88]

The text of the Göttingen LXX is reconstructed from many different manuscripts, in Greek and other languages. Rahlfs, in preparing his edition, divided the manuscripts into families.[89] Not surprisingly, there is some variation in the superscriptions of the daily psalms across manuscripts and families. Some of these variations are relatively unimportant for identification of the psalms.[90] Some bear on the association of the psalms with the days of the week. Specifically, Ps 94 and 92 are identified as daily psalms in all families; Ps 24 and 48 by all but one and similarly for Ps 93 (with more variation among mss). However, Ps 81 is identified as a daily psalm in a much more limited set of manuscripts, which include the Sahidic and Old Latin daughter translations, along with some other witnesses in Latin, Ethiopic and Armenian.[91] The basis for Rahlfs editorial decisions as

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τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ προσαββάτου ὅτε κατῴκισται ἡ γῆ αἶνος ᾠδῆς τῷ Δαυιδ; Ps 92:1, ψαλμὸς ᾠδῆς εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ σαββάτου. The superscription for Ps 38 (LXX Ps 37) also refers to the Sabbath, but not as the day on which the psalm was performed (ψαλμὸς τῷ Δαυιδ εἰς ἀνάμνησιν περὶ σαββάτου). At least one ms (1219) has the superscription for Ps 24 transposed to Ps 23.

[88] In the text it is cited in a form that agrees with the MT; Ps 81:1, εἰς τὸ τέλος ὑπὲρ τῶν ληνῶν τῷ Ασαφ ψαλμός; in the apparatus, πέμπτη σαββάτου.

[89] See the Prolegomena to Rahlfs, *Psalmi*. The divisions and procedures employed by Rahlfs have been strongly criticized; see Pietersma, "Present State," 21–27.

[90] For example, variations between σαββάτου and σαββάτων.

[91] The Latin texts are important and varied enough to warrant some explanation. There are four major Latin versions of the Psalter: the Old Latin and the three editions traditionally associated with Jerome, the *Psalter Romanum*, a revision of the Old Latin, the *Psalter Gallicanum*, which used Origen's *Hexapla*, and the *Psalter iuxta Hebraios*, translated from the Hebrew. The superscriptions for the Tamid Psalms in the last of these correspond with those in the MT. On the other hand, there is strong and often complete agreement among the textual witnesses for the other versions that a reference to the day of the week appeared in the superscriptions for Ps 24, 48, 81, 92, 93 and 94. The headings are Ps 24:1, Psalmus David prima sabbati; Ps 48:1, Psalmus cantici filiis Core secunda sabbati; Ps 82:1, Psalmus Asaph; Ps 94:1, Psalmus David quarta sabbati; Ps 81:1, In finem pro torcularibus Asaph quinta sabbati; Ps 93:1, Laus cantici David in die ante sabbatum . . .; Ps 92:1, Psalmus cantici in die sabbati. The reference to the day in Ps 81 is omitted from most mss of the *Psalter Gallicanum*, although some refer to a day (either the fourth or the fifth). As is to be expected, there are slight and eccentric variations between mss. See the critical edition of Robert Weber, *Le Psautier Romain et les autres anciens Psautiers latins* (CBL 10; Rome: Abbaye Saint-Jerome, 1953), also Robert Weber et al., *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatum versionem*, Vol. 1 (Rev. ed.; Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1975). For background on the various Latin texts, see Pierre-Maurice Bogaert, "Le psautier latin des origines au XIIe siècle. Essai d'histoire," in Aejmelaeus and Quast, Der Septuaginta-Psalter, 51–81, esp. 58–64; Ernst Würthwein, *The Text*

regards the superscriptions of the daily psalms is clear from this evidence. However, as the Sahidic and the Old Latin represent two very important textual groups, there is, in fact, strong evidence in the mss traditions of the LXX for the association of Ps 81 with the fifth day. In other words, the witness of the LXX traditions agrees with *m. Tamid* in its association of psalms with weekdays; this association is very strong for five psalms and exists in a weaker form for a sixth.

An argument has been advanced that the paucity or absence of attestations for three of the weekday psalms (Ps 81, 82 and 93) undermines the trustworthiness of that for the other three weekday psalms. From this it is concluded that the original translation lacked reference to any weekday psalm.[92] This argument does not adequately explain the consistency of references to a partial set of daily psalms. One would expect most manuscripts either to follow the MT in identifying only one psalm (the Sabbath Psalm) or to designate a full set of seven daily psalms (possibly with disagreements between families). Consistent attestation of a partial set is counter-intuitive.

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of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica (2d ed.; rev. and enl.; trans. Errol F. Rhodes; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1995), 91–99.

[92] Hedley, "Göttingen Investigation," 65–66; also Pietersma, "Present State," 29–30. In fact, the variety of psalm collections found among the Dead Sea Scrolls problematizes the assumption that the LXX version can be traced back to one translation. If many variant psalm collections existed in Hebrew, then there may also have been many different Greek translations and the LXX version may derive from a combination of several of these, see Eugene Ulrich, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and their Implications for an Edition of the Septuagint Psalter," in Aejmelaeus and Quast, *Der Septuaginta-Psalter*, 336; also Peter W. Flint, "Variant Readings of the Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls against the Massoretic Text and the Septuagint," in the same volume, 337–65. The most questionable attestations in the superscriptions of the daily psalms belong to Asaph Psalms from the third book of the Psalter. Might this reflect some aspect of the history of transmission and redaction of the (LXX) Psalter? For example: (a) It is widely thought that the last two books of the MT Psalter reached their final form much later than the first two (see ch. 5, section 2.3); similarly, there may have been a disjunction between the first two and the third, which is reflected in the LXX superscriptions; or (b) Martin Buss has argued that the performance of psalms of Asaph, among others, was restricted to certain musicians; the variations in the superscriptions may have come about since such psalms were handled differently in an earlier period; see Buss, "The Psalms of Asaph and Korah," *JBL* 82 (1963): 382–92. The suggestion of Ad. Neubauer that the LXX translation was made from a teaching copy of the Psalter (trained Levites would have memorized the liturgical cycle) fails to explain the omission of daily attestations for Ps 82 and 81 in some families; see Neubauer, "The Authorship and the Titles of the Psalms according to early Jewish Authorities," *Studia Biblica et Ecclesiastica* 2 (1890): 4–5.

Nevertheless, even if this conclusion is accepted, implications for the identification of the Tamid Psalms must be drawn carefully. The argument concerns, in essence, the wording of the original text of the Greek translation of the Psalter. It does not necessarily invalidate the witness of the LXX manuscript tradition to the daily usage of certain psalms. It is certain that emendations occurred to the earliest texts of the LXX. It is also possible that some editor decided, at a later stage, to add a reference in a superscription to the use of a psalm on a weekday. If this change were made on the basis of knowledge of the actual ritual performed in the Temple, then the veracity of the LXX superscriptions with regard to the identification of the Tamid Psalms still stands. It is only when such a change was made on the basis of incorrect information about the Temple rituals, or for some reason other than Temple usage, that the witness of the LXX is undermined.

Given the widespread knowledge of the Tamid service, misinformation about the service could have existed only after, in fact well after, the destruction of the Temple. In this case, both *m. Tamid* and the LXX are in error as to the identification of the daily psalms (with perhaps dependency between them). However, the peculiar consistent incompleteness of the LXX manuscripts in agreeing on five or six daily psalms speaks against a *late* change. The later the change, the more variation one would expect across manuscripts and families. One would also expect the identification of a full set of daily psalms, not agreement on a partial set of five.

What of the alternative that the superscriptions were intended by those who created them to indicate something other than liturgical usage in the Tamid ritual? Perhaps they were meditative or exegetical guides for reading of the psalms. Such a position, nevertheless, must account for the witness of the Mishnah and reconcile the evolution of the later liturgical explanation with the hypothetical original non-liturgical function of the superscriptions in the LXX. A plausible reconstruction must be given for a scenario that – in simple form – runs approximately like this: The psalms were not used liturgically in the weekly worship cycle, yet (for some reason) became associated with the days of the week and so attracted the superscriptions found in the LXX, but then, after the fall of Jerusalem, the rabbis decided (erroneously) that they were daily liturgical psalms and added a comment to this effect at the end of *m. Tamid*, perhaps in the second century C.E., after which time they found their way into the

Jewish synagogue liturgy. This is a rather convoluted scenario whose major points – the original weekly association, how it dropped from widespread knowledge, the rise of the rabbinic misconception and the adoption of the psalms into liturgy – are opaque. It requires a complicated chain of explanation.[93] In the absence of further evidence and a convincing reconstruction, taking the superscriptions of the LXX at face value, as indicating liturgical use of the psalms from the start, is a far simpler course.[94]

The so-called Syro-Hexaplaric Psalter, a Syriac translation of the Psalter attributed to Paul of Tella and commonly (but perhaps mistakenly) thought to be based on Origen's *Hexapla*, is in agreement with the LXX in the superscriptions of the Tamid Psalms and indicates daily usage for Ps 24, 48, 94, 93, and 92.[95] The Syriac Peshitta

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[93] Albert Pietersma has recently argued that the superscriptions on the daily psalms were not indicators of liturgical usage, but exegetical comments, that is, they were observations on how the psalm was intended to be interpreted rather than information on liturgical practice, see "Present State," 29–30; "Exegesis and Liturgy in the Superscripts of the Greek Psalter," in *X Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Oslo, 1998* (ed. Bernard A. Taylor; SCS 51; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001). While his comments in the second essay show a masterful knowledge of LXX usage, his case is ultimately unconvincing. His reconstruction is incomplete, in that he provides only a hypothetical explanation for the original exegetical meaning of the psalms, but does not address the problem of the development of the later liturgical association. Furthermore, he does not provide a consistent explanation for the original exegetical function. He links some (but not all) psalms to the days of creation. The association with the days of creation, however, is suspect; it will be scrutinized and rejected in ch. 4.5.1.

[94] Under the alternative of a non-liturgical basis for the daily psalms, the study of the Tamid Psalms (or at least five or six of them) as a collection in their own right is still warranted, since these particular psalms are still linked by their superscription. Almost all of the present investigation and its conclusions will still stand. The examination of the psalms as a literary text in chs. 3 and 4 and the comparison with other collections in ch. 5 would be largely unaffected, although the discussion of the link between the ritual and the psalms would suffer a loss of justification.

[95] Robert J. V. Hiebert, *The "Syrohexaplaric" Psalter* (SBLSCS 27; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989). Hiebert examines the extent of the characteristics of the Hexapla in this Psalter and concludes that that the "Syrohexaplaric" Psalter is, in fact, not markedly hexaplaric, even though the rest of the Syrohexapla is. See also Hiebert, "The 'Syrohexaplaric' Psalter: Its Text and History," in Aejmelaeus and Quast, *Der Septuaginta-Psalter*, 123–46 and idem, "Syriac Biblical Textual History and the Greek Psalter," in *The Old Greek Psalter: Studies in Honour of Albert Pietersma* (ed. Robert J. V. Hiebert, Claude E. Cox and Peter J. Gentry; JSOTSup 332; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 178–88. Rahlf's edition of the LXX Psalter does not adequately take into account the readings in the Syrohexaplaric Psalter; see Rahlfs, *Psalmi*, 22; Hiebert, "Syrohexaplaric Psalter," 124.

Psalter has idiosyncratic superscriptions.[96] Evidence from many other important versions of the Psalter in non-Semitic languages has been taken into account in the determination of the eclectic text of the Göttingen Septuagint discussed above, and as a consequence these versions do not require further consideration.

The Targum on the Psalter follows the MT in its superscriptions, making explicit only the connection between Ps 92 and a day of the week.[97] Likewise, the expositions in *Midrash Tehillim* give no indication that the psalms had superscriptions associating them with days of the week, apart from Ps 92.[98] It does, however, connect some Psalms with days of creation; Ps 92 for the seventh day and also the time of creation of Adam, and Ps 93 for the first and third days (Gen 1:2, 9).

The evidence from the ancient versions corroborates the Mishnah for identification of six of the seven daily psalms. There is unanimity on Ps 92 overwhelming agreement for Ps 24, 48, 94, and 93; and strong support for Ps 81. The relative silence on Ps 82 is odd. What is one to make of this? On one hand, if the Mishnah is correct for six out of seven, it seems reasonable to assume that it is also correct for the seventh, and consequently that towards the end of the Second Temple Period, Ps 82 was used as the psalm for the third day. On the other hand, the lack of support for Ps 82 in the LXX might suggest that it was a latecomer to the group and that earlier some other psalm stood in its place.

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[96] W. Bloemendaal, *The Headings of the Psalms in the East Syrian Church* (Leiden: Brill, 1960), 1–3. On the Peshitta text in general, see Richard A. Taylor, "The Syriac Old Testament in Recent Research," *JAB* 2 (2000): 119–39.

[97] For a modern edition of a targum on the Psalter from the Sephardic tradition, see Luis Díez Merino, *Targum de Salmos: Edición Príncipe del Ms. Villa-Amil n. 5 de Alfonso de Zamora* (BHB 6. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas Instituto "Francisco Suarez," 1982). Older sources are the polyglots, e.g., the London Polyglot, Brian Walton, ed., *Biblia Sacra polyglotta* . . . 1654–58; 6 vols. Repr. Graz: Akademische Druck U. Verlaganstalt, 1964. On the different manuscript traditions, see Diez Merino, "Targum Manuscripts and Critical Editions" in *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in their Historical Context* (ed. D. R. G. Beattie and M. J. McNamara; JSOTSup 166; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 51–91. For a study of the translations of the psalms superscriptions, see Horst D. Preuss, "Die Psalmenüberschriften in Targum und Midrasch," *ZAW* 71 (1959): 44–54.

[98] William G. Braude, trans., *The Midrash on the Psalms* (2 vols.; YJS 13; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959). Psalm 94 is said to have been sung on Saturday night, at the time of the destruction of the Temple, Ps 48:5–6 is linked to the day of destruction of Jerusalem and Ps 81 to New Year's Day.

A few commentators have adopted this second position.[99] In particular, it has been argued that Ps 97 predated Ps 82 as the psalm for the third day. The case made for this position firstly notes the lack of evidence for Ps 82 in the superscriptions and then the similarity in the superscriptions of Ps 93 and 97 in the LXX, both in word and theme. There are insuperable problems with this line of reasoning. The second step seems to assume that the superscriptions of the daily psalms exhibit (or should exhibit) some thematic and/or linguistic consistency. A glance at the six uncontested psalms shows how problematic this is. One might equally argue for any psalm attributed to David, Asaph or Korah as a replacement for Ps 82, since these names appear in the superscriptions. Superscriptional evidence alone is not conclusive. Silence on Ps 82 and the lesser number of witnesses for Ps 81 may indicate a difference in the editorial or translation process in the LXX between Book 3 of the Psalter and the other books.[100]

There is no positive evidence for any other psalm preceding Ps 82. One can go further. There is no evidence for any variations in the daily psalms at all! The superscriptions do not hint at changes. Other sources mention changes to the Temple rituals, but none concern variations in the daily psalms.[101] Any argument about the evolution of the daily psalms is based on silence. The interpreter must supply, or rather conjecture, the prior psalm, the cause of change and the date of alteration.

For these reasons, it seems more prudent to accept Ps 82 as a Tamid Psalm, as indicated by the Mishnah, rather than attempt the highly speculative task of finding a replacement for it. Thus, on the balance of probabilities, the daily psalms in the late Second Temple period were Ps 24, 48, 82, 94, 81, 93, and 92, as given in *m. Tamid* 7:4.

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[99] For example, F. W. Mozley, *The Psalter of the Church: The Septuagint Psalms Compared with the Hebrew, with Various Notes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1905), 152; Henry Plantin, "Leviternas veckodagspsalmer i templet," *SEÅ* 48 (1983): 49–50.

[100] Albert Pietersma has argued that the ὅτε clause in the superscription of Ps 93 is secondary. If this is accepted (and his case is strong) then the similarity between the superscriptions of Ps 93 and 97 is gone. This significantly weakens the argument that Ps 97 was a Tamid Psalm. See Pietersma, "David in the Greek Psalms," *VT* 30 (1980): 221.

[101] For example, variations under Hyrcanus, *m. Maas. Sh.* 5:15, *m. Sotah* 9:10, or the discontinuation of "sheet" music, *Ant.* 20.216–218.

The question then arises as to the date this set came into use. This is very difficult to answer. There is, unfortunately, no direct evidence for the date of adoption of the Tamid Psalms. Indirect evidence may be sought in two ways, neither of which is particularly convincing. First, since the psalms were identified in the LXX, the date of their adoption precedes that of this translation. The Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures commenced in the third century with the Pentateuch and was probably completed about 150 years later, at the start of the first century. It appears that the psalms may have been translated sometime in the second century.[102] This points to a second century or earlier date for the adoption of the Tamid Psalms. This argument is flawed in that it assumes that the superscriptions in the LXX were contemporary with the translation of the psalms, and not later additions. Not enough is known about the translation history of the LXX Psalter to resolve this matter.[103] While the superscriptions of the LXX corroborate the claims of the Mishnah with respect to liturgical use of the Tamid Psalms, they are not reliable for inferences about date.

A similar point also holds for the MT version of Ps 92, where it has been argued from a comparison of the superscriptions in the MT and the LXX, that Ps 92 was fixed as a daily psalm before the

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[102] Many have argued this case. See, e.g., the recent essay of Tyler F. Williams, "Towards a Date for the Old Greek Psalter," in Hiebert et al., *The Old Greek Psalter,* 248–76. Williams decides that "all of the available evidence converges to support the idea of the unity of the translation, and to confirm the thesis that the Greek Psalter originated in the second century BCE" (249). However, he hesitates to choose between the early or late part of that century. Joachim Schaper argues for a date in the second half of the second century against others who put it earlier; see Schaper, *Eschatology in the Greek Psalter* (WUNT 2/76; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1995), 39–41.

[103] Opinions vary. Pietersma has proposed that the superscriptions for all the daily psalms are secondary (see further, n. 93). Others view the superscriptions as original. For example, Arie van der Kooij argued that the superscriptions for the Tamid Psalms "probably belonged to the original Greek"; for Martin Rösel they suggest the interpretive role of the LXX translator, either reflecting the high regard for the Temple in the LXX Psalter or the process of "Davidisation" (the latter is less likely, see below); while Rainer Stichel, who does not comment on the daily psalms specifically, sees certain superscriptions as capturing the intent of the author of the psalms. See Pietersma "David," 221–22; idem "Present State," 29–30; idem "Exegesis and Liturgy;" van der Kooij, "On the Place of Origin of the Old Greek Psalms" *VT* 33 (1983): 71–73; Rösel, "Die Psalmenüberschriften des Septuaginta-Psalters" in *Des Septuaginta-Psalter: sprachliche und theologische Aspekte* (ed. Erich Zenger; BibSt 32; Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2001), 143–45; Stichel, "Zur Herkunft der Psalmenüberschriften in der Septuaginta," ibid., 149–161.

others.[104] The crucial assumption in this argument, but one often unstated, is that the MT superscriptions have chronological priority over those in the LXX. This is far from obvious. For example, the priority may be liturgical, rather than temporal, that is, the MT superscriptions may reflect the religious priority of the Sabbath day, not a chronological priority in adoption as a daily psalm. A zealous redactor may have expanded the superscription to Ps 92, or cut those in the other six psalms, quite late in the history of the MT Psalter.[105]

Another approach to dating would be to locate the adoption of the Tamid Psalms at some important point in the history of Judaism or the Temple in the Second Temple period. There are several candidates, such as the re-institution and reform of worship under the Maccabees, the reform of Hyrcanus or the rebuilding of the Temple by Herod. The problem is deciding among the possibilities. Different themes in the psalms operate to favour different options. For example, the positive assessment of the security of Jerusalem in Ps 48 would be consistent with a high point in Judean history, such as the independence won by the Maccabees or the glory of the Herodian Temple. On the other hand, gloomy references to oppression in Ps 94 might point to a time when independence was weak and Jerusalem threatened.[106]

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[104] Nahum M. Sarna, "The Psalm for the Sabbath Day (Ps 92)," in *Studies in Biblical Interpretation* (JPSSD; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2000), 396; repr. from *JBL* 81 (1962).

[105] It is possible that the LXX superscriptions are older than those in the MT, that is, that the editors of the MT Psalter in the first century C.E. altered the superscriptions to remove the references to the weekday psalms. The case for this position relies on three relatively recent developments in the study of the Psalter, which will be more fully explored in ch. 5, namely: (1) that several compilations of psalms circulated in the late Second Temple period, none of which had a dominant authority; (2) that the MT Psalter stabilized relatively late, in the first century C.E. and received its authority then; and (3) that the editorial shaping of the MT Psalter moved it away from being a liturgical collection, for example, under the influence of wisdom considerations. A plausible scenario is that multiple versions of the Psalter circulated; some identified the daily psalms, some did not.

[106] For example, H. Graetz, noting a dismal mood in the psalms favors a date after the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey, while Thomas K. Cheyne, on similar grounds, suggests the late Persian period. Henry Plantin identifies verses celebrating the revolt and victory of the Maccabees. Roger Beckwith, on the other hand, sees the destruction of Solomon's Temple as the disruptive event in the history of the MT Psalter; the Psalter stabilized soon thereafter; and the LXX superscriptions preserve liturgical information from the early second century B.C.E. at the latest. See Graetz, *Kritischer Commentar zu den Psalmen: nebst Text und Uebersetzung* (Breslau:

In sum, the date when these particular seven psalms, Ps 24, 48, 82, 94, 81, 93, and 92, came to be the fixed psalms for the Tamid service cannot be determined with confidence. It may have been quite late. On the other hand, there is nothing to contradict the view they were adopted in the second century B.C.E. or even earlier.

6. *Conclusion*

Performance of the Tamid service was a long standing tradition in the worship at the Jerusalem Temple. At its core lay the sacrifice and offering of a lamb twice per day, in the morning and afternoon. By the late Second Temple period, the service had evolved to include other rituals in addition to the daily activities prescribed in the Torah. The two daily worship services were of great importance in the routine of the cult. Together they marked the start and end of the day's cultic activities, and their performance was held to validate the other sacrifices of the day and the cultic worship in general.

The Tamid services were public sacrifices offered on behalf of Israel. Religious traditions required that representatives of the people be present at the service. These representatives traveled to Jerusalem with the courses of priests and Levites performing their tour of duty. In addition, worship services outside Jerusalem were coordinated with the time of the Tamid service, in accord with the attitude that the Tamid encompassed all Israel. Cessation of the service in times of disturbance under Antiochus IV Epiphanes and at the end of the rebellion against Rome caused great consternation. The Tamid ritual was the kernel of the relation with God as this was expressed in the cult of the Temple.

Sources differ on the interpretation of the service. Philo explains it as a thank offering (*Spec. Laws* 1.168). Elsewhere it is understood as for atonement (*Jub.* 6.14 and the later rabbinic Akedah tradition). From a practical point of view, its performance was required for the efficacy of all other sacrifices. More than this is hard to say. Perhaps

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Shottlaender, 1882), 56; Cheyne, *The Origin and Religious Contents of the Psalter in the Light of Old Testament Criticism and the History of Religions; with an introduction and appendices. Eight lectures preached before the University of Oxford in the year 1889 on the foundation of the late Rev. John Bampton, M.A., Canon of Salisbury* (Bampton Lectures, 1889; London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1891), 83; Plantin, "Veckodagspsalmer"; Beckwith, "The Early History of the Psalter," *TynBul* 46 (1995): 1–27.

the Tamid was so foundational that the regularity of its performance overshadowed the question of its meaning. As breathing is a sign of a living body, so the performance of the Tamid service was a sign of a living cult, without which no other cultic practice had meaning.

Knowledge of the Tamid service would have been widespread in Judaism. Along with the rostered courses of priests, Levites and lay representatives there would have been pilgrims to Jerusalem and supplicants waiting to make an offering that day who would have observed the service. This increases the probability that accurate information on the service has been preserved in the written documents from the late Second Temple period and in early rabbinical literature such as *m. Tamid*, at least in regard to details observable by lay people. One such detail was the psalm for the day.

At least from the time of the Chronicler, the Tamid ritual complex included performance of a psalm. By the late Second Temple period, perhaps in the mid-second century if not earlier, these psalms had stabilized into a group of seven that can be reliably identified as Ps 24, 48, 82, 94, 81, 93, and 92.

CHAPTER THREE

THE TAMID PSALMS

This chapter consists of a series of detailed studies of each of the seven Tamid Psalms. Each psalm will be examined in its own right in the light of previous scholarship and knowledge of the Second Temple period. The exegetical discussions will be oriented towards the needs of the following chapters, where the Tamid Psalms are considered as a literary text and placed in their various contexts, literary and cultic. As a consequence of concentrating on the psalms in the setting of the late Second Temple period, much less attention needs to be paid to issues that often occupy the bulk of an exegetical study of a psalm, issues such as early use, composition, Canaanite precursors and the like, as these concern the use of the psalm in a much earlier time.[1]

In line with the interest in the Tamid Psalms as a literary text, in the present chapter literary aspects of the psalms will be stressed (structure, imagery, polysemy, etc.). In particular, the discussion of each psalm will conclude with a summary of the motifs, agents and theme of that psalm. These summaries will feed directly into the examination of the motifs, agents and theme of the whole collection in the next chapter. Given the importance of these concepts in the

[1] The redaction history of the psalms is also of marginal relevance, as is the question of the earliest form of the text. Metrical considerations are frequently used to restore an earlier form of the psalm text. For the Tamid Psalms, the validity of emendations based on this method is extremely dubious. The psalms were sung up to 70 C.E. Hence they must have been able to be scanned by the choir. This implies either that the alteration which disrupted the orderly metrical structure of the psalm did not occur until after 70 C.E., or that variations to the meter did not offend the sensibilities of the late Second Temple period. The first option is untenable; it cannot be applied as a general principle consistently across the Psalter, yet if not applied consistently, its worth is undermined by arbitrariness. The second option is self-defeating as it leads to the impossible task of determining when a "metrical irregularity" became acceptable. Was this a postexilic development, or preexilic? In either case, it is methodologically unsound to use irregularities as evidence for emendations when one dates a psalm as *postexilic*; e.g., Hans-Joachim Kraus does for Ps 92; see Kraus, *Psalms 60–150: A Commentary* (trans. Hilton C. Oswald; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), 228.

present study, it is necessary at the outset to clarify how the terms are being used.

The term agent is used in this study in a very loose and comprehensive sense, to cover all the actants, patients, characters, *dramatis personae* (and even some of the scenery) in the psalms. Comprehensiveness ensures that connections between psalms will not be lost. The range of agents in the Tamid Psalms turns out to be rather limited. Typically, the agents comprise Yahweh, people (usually stereotyped into classes) and a restricted number of inanimate elements (such as Zion or creation). The characterization of an agent includes both dynamic and static aspects, that is, actions depicted and qualities predicated of them. One agent who always occurs and occupies a distinctive place in the psalm is the speaking voice (or the implied singer) of the psalm (cf. the narrator in prose).[2]

In the case of the speaking voice, two properties need to be distinguished: presence and identity. The term presence is used to indicate the extent to which the voice is "inside" the psalm. This is usually effected through grammatical devices. At one extreme, the speaking voice may be absent from the content of the psalm. This may be marked by verbs in the third person or equivalent constructions. Such poetry frequently has a dogmatic or didactic quality (e.g., Ps 24:1–2). On the other hand, the use of first person forms (singular or plural) places the voice "inside" the psalm, giving a more personal or reflective quality to the content. In between these two lies second person address, cohortative or imperative forms that maintain some distance between speaking voice, content and audience. The second issue, identity, is the question of who the voice is in the internal context created by the psalm ("the world of the text"). Some degree of presence is a precondition for the identification of the voice. If the voice lacks immediate presence, then the identity is more arbitrary. The speaker appears only as an authoritative omniscient voice. First person speech may allow for identification of the voice. For example, in Ps 81:11, the speaker is Yahweh.[3] The speaking

[2] The role of the speaking voice is similar to that of the narrator in Hebrew narrative. On the latter, see Mieke Bal, *On Story Telling: Essays in Narratology* (FF; Sonoma, Ca.: Polebridge, 1991), 75–108. The implied speaking voice should be distinguished from the human(s) who delivered the psalm. The actual singer for the Tamid Psalms was the choir of levites.

[3] One might object that v. 6c has the effect of converting what follows into

voice may not remain constant throughout the psalm, either in presence or identity. In Ps 24:8, the identification of the voice changes from one part of the verse to the next as one voice (deficient in knowledge) asks a question ("Who is the glorious king?") and another (perhaps omniscient) answers.

The concepts of theme and motif shade together.[4] In this study, a theme is considered to be a summation of the semantic unity of a work. It is an abstraction derived from the work and as such may be vague or tendentious. For example, semantic unity may prove elusive in a psalm with very disparate sections and in this case multiple themes may be required. Motifs are more concrete. They are semantic units which can be found stated or illustrated in the sections of the text itself. The theme is distilled from the motifs and conversely the theme provides a unifying conceptual framework for diverse motifs. The distinction between theme and motif is not clear-cut. It is relative to the text considered, for example, a motif (or theme) in one section may be the theme (or motif) of the larger work. The concept of theme provides a convenient way for organizing the motifs that appear in each individual Tamid Psalm.

The concepts of agents and motifs/themes are different but not disjoint. Agents appear in themes and motifs, while motifs may describe the activities or properties of agents. Some overlap in the descriptions of these aspects in each psalm is unavoidable.

1. *Psalm 24*

1. Of David, a psalm.
   The earth belongs to Yahweh and everything in it;
   the world and those who dwell in it.

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reported speech. Nevertheless, there is a difference between recounting speech *verbatim* and transposing it into one's own words. The former occurs in Ps 81.

[4] See Russell Brown, "Theme," in *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory: Approaches, Scholars, Terms* (ed. Irena R. Makaryk; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 642–46, esp. 643. Abrams distinguishes motif as a "conspicuous element . . . which occurs frequently in works of literature" from theme as "a general concept or doctrine, whether implicit of explicit, which an imaginative work is designed to incorporate and make persuasive to the reader"; see M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (7th ed.; Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, 1999), 169–70.

2. For he[5] was the one who laid its foundations on the seas
   and fixed it upon the rivers.

3. Who may go up onto the mountain of Yahweh;
   and who may stand up in his holy place?
4. One whose hands are clean and whose heart pure,
   who does not place their trust in a falsehood,
   and who does not swear treacherously.
5. [Such a] one will receive a blessing from Yahweh,
   and benefit from the God of their salvation.
6. Such is the company of those who turn to him,
   who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

Selah

7. Lift up your heads, O Gates,
   and raise yourselves up, O Eternal Doors,
   that the Glorious King may enter.
8. Who is this Glorious King?
   Yahweh, mighty and heroic,
   Yahweh, heroic in battle.

9. Lift up your heads, O Gates,
   and rise up, O Eternal Doors,
   that the Glorious King may enter.
10. Who is this Glorious King?
   Yahweh Sabaoth,
   he is the Glorious King.

Selah

v. 1: The LXX includes a reference to the day of the week: τῆς μιᾶς σαββάτων.

those who dwell in it: The LXX reads "all those who dwell in it" and matching phrases occur in Nah 1:5; Ps 33:8 and Lam 4:12, but the sense

[5] The convention adopted here with regard to translation of the Hebrew third person masculine pronoun, suffix or verbal forms when these refer to a *generic human being* is to render these either as the indeterminate pronoun "one" (or some construction based on this) or by the plural third person ("them" or "their"). The former course is usually followed when the pronoun is the subject of an English verb, the latter for object and possessive pronouns, e.g., vv. 4, 5. Unfortunately, no simple periphrasis is available if the reference is to *Yahweh*, since the word "God" is used to translate the Hebrew word אלהים; therefore masculine pronouns are maintained in this case.

is clear without "all" and the shorter phrase is found in Ps 98:7 in both the MT and LXX.

v. 2: *For*: The LXX omits כי.

The MT imperfect here refers to past events; see GKC §107b. The rivers are the pulsations in the primordial sea below the earth, rather than watercourses on the surface of the earth, cf. Is 44:27; Jon 2:4. Mitchell Dahood renders the phrase "ocean currents"; see Dahood, *Psalms I: 1–50: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (AB 16; New York: Doubleday, 1965), 151.

v. 4: "Clean as regards hands"; see GKC §128y.

place their trust in a falsehood: Literally "who does not lift his soul to something futile," reading the *kethib* נפשׁו with the LXX and other mss.

swear treacherously: The LXX adds "to his neighbor."

v. 6: *Such is the company*: Two issues arise in the translation of this halfverse: How to emend דרשׁו and how to interpret דור. The *qere* converts the former into a participle with plural suffix. Alternatively, Dahood repoints דרשׁו as an imperative (*Psalms 1*, 151–52). The customary translation of דור is "generation," denoting either genealogical descendents or the period of time required for these to reach maturity, but the word can also indicate the collection of those living at the same time as a person, or a more limited group of people with something in common, so "assembly, congregation"; see F. J. Neuberg, "An Unrecognized Meaning of Hebrew 'Dor'," *JNES* 9 (1950): 215–17; D. N. Freedman, J. Lundbom and G. J. Botterweck, "דּוֹר; dor," *TDOT* 3:173–75. Of these four possibilities, the last is the most suitable, since neither progeny nor time is in view in the psalm and, as the psalmist is distinguishing the pious, the inclusion of all contemporaries is too broad (cf. Ps 14:5; 73:15). Other lines of approach may be taken. Usage in some Ugaritic texts has led to the suggestion that זה דור is a divine title; see Freedman, et al., *TDOT* 3:175–76; Dahood, *Psalms 1*, 151–52. However, it is an open question as to whether the phrase would have been recognised as such in the late Second Temple period. Theodore H. Gaster would read דור as "fortune" and modify יעקב to ועקב, "and the reward"; see Gaster, "Short Notes," *VT* 4 (1954): 73. The LXX has γενεά, which is in accord with the translation given here.

such: For the characterizing use of זה, see *IBHS*, §17.4.2c.

the face of the God of Jacob: The MT reads "who seek your face Jacob." Two difficulties impede translation of this line: the grammatical role to be assigned to Jacob and the presence of the possessive pronoun. The second person pronoun, which occurs only here in the psalm, has no obvious antecedent. In the rest of vv. 3–6 it is God who is being approached (but not addressed directly). Thus it is reasonable to assume v. 6b also refers to the face of God, and alter the verse appropriately. The minimal emendation to achieve this sense is to read the third person suffix and appeal to an elliptical usage of פנים with the suffix (cf. Ps 27:8; Hos 5:15); see Siegried Wagner, "בִּקֵּשׁ biqqesh; בִּקָּשָׁה," *TDOT* 2:236. The LXX and Syriac, on the other hand, include a term for

"God." As for Jacob, it is usually taken, as here and in the LXX, in a genitive construction with the reference to God, or as a summary title for those who seek God (i.e., parallel to דור); see Pierre Auffret, "Qui est ce Roi de la Gloire? – Étude Structurelle du Ps 24," *RThom* 90 (1990): 105. Although Nic Tromp prefers a different solution, namely that the verse refers to God-fearers who come to serve Israel, he does conjecture that the LXX "could represent the original text"; see Tromp, "Jacob in Psalm 24: Apposition, Aphaeresis or Apostrophe?," in *Von Kanaan bis Kerala: Festschrift für Prof. Mag. Dr. Dr. J. P. M. van der Ploeg O. P. zur Vollendung des siebzigsten Lebensjahres am 4. Juli 1979: Überreicht von Kollegen, Freunden und Schülern* (ed. W. C. Delsman et al.; AOAT 211; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1982), 271–82. Israel Slotki dissolves all difficulties in this verse (and in others) by postulating the repetition of phrases in the psalm, including זה דור before יעקב and מבקשי; see Slotki, "The Text and the Ancient Form of Recital of Psalm 24 and Psalm 124," *JBL* 51 (1932): 214–19. See also the discussions in Jannie du Preez, "Mission Perspectives in an Old Testament Procession Song: Psalm 24," *Missionalia* 18 (1990): 335–36.

v. 7: *raise youselves up:* The parallelism and lack of agent suggest a middle meaning for the niphal. A passive construction is also possible; see GKC §51; *IBHS*, §23.1–4.

v. 8: Or "Who is this? The Glorious King is Yahweh, mighty and heroic; Yahweh, heroic in battle."

v. 9: *rise up:* The MT has a Qal imperative in this line, but many mss and commentators read the niphal as in v. 7b.

The psalm may be divided into three sections. It opens with a brief hymnic introduction asserting God's possession of the cosmos (vv. 1–2). This is followed by a description of the characteristics and rewards of one who seeks God, framed in question and answer form (vv. 3–6). The psalm concludes with a dialogue between a speaker and the gates, identifying and requesting entry for the "Glorious King" (vv. 7–10).[6]

Modern scholarship on the psalm has been dominated by speculation about the original life-setting and antecedents of the sections, in particular the second and third.[7] The second section is frequently

[6] The division into three parts represents the consensus. A few would disagree with this. For example, Sigurdur Ö. Steingrimsson splits v. 6 off on the grounds of its plural number, resulting in four sections, while P. J. Botha prefers to speak of 2 stanzas with 4 strophes; see Steingrimsson, *Tor der Gerechtigkeit: Eine literaturwissenschaftliche Untersuchung der sogenannten Einzugsliturgien im AT: Ps 15; 24, 3–5 und Jes 33, 14–16* (MUKTF 22; St Ottilien: Eos Verlag, 1984), 72; Botha, "Psalm 24:Unity in Diversity," *OTE* 7 (1994): 362.

[7] In traditional Christian interpretation, the psalm was linked with the "harrow-

assigned to a ritual performed at entry to the Temple, and classified as an "Entrance Liturgy" or "Torah Liturgy," depending on whether the activity of entry or the content of the response is highlighted.[8] The third section is commonly linked with a ceremony that included the celebration of Yahweh's entry into the Temple or the city. It is imagined that in this ceremony, a procession made its way to the gates where entry was demanded in an exchange that utilized vv. 7–10. This section, too, is sometimes called an "Entrance Liturgy." The first section, perhaps because it lacks dramatic characteristics,

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ing of hell," that period between the crucifixion and resurrection when Christ conquered the underworld. The words of v. 7 were addressed to the gates of hell in order that Christ might enter. More recently, Alan Cooper has connected the psalm with a similar, but hypothetical, Israelite descent myth. In Jewish traditions, vv. 7–10 were explained by reference either to historical circumstances drawn from the Bible (e.g., as spoken by Solomon upon the entry of the Ark into the newly completed Temple or by the returnees to the gates of Jerusalem sunken in rubble, cf. Lam 2:9), or to a future hope of the restoration and re-population of Jerusalem. The opening verse of the psalm developed in Jewish traditions into a grace before meals, cf. 1 Cor 10:26. See Allen Cabaniss, "The Harrowing of Hell: Psalm 24, and Pliny the Younger: A Note," *VC* 7 (1953): 65–69; Ernst Kähler, *Studien zum Te Deum: und zur Geschichte des 24. Psalms in der Alten Kirche* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1958), 44–50; Alan Cooper, "Ps 24:7–10: Mythology and Exegesis," *JBL* 102 (1983): 37–60; Johann Maier, "Salmo 24, 1: Interpretazione Rabbinica, Berakah Giudaica e Benedizione Cristiana," *Aug* 28 (1988): 285–300.

[8] Psalm 15 is also taken as an example of this genre. See Hermann Gunkel, *Introduction to the Psalms: The Genres of the Religious Lyric of Israel* (completed by Joachim Begrich; trans. James D. Nogalski; Mercer Library of Biblical Studies; Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1998), 289, 313; Hermann Gunkel, "Jesaia 33, eine prophetische Liturgie: Ein Vortrag," *ZAW* 42 (1924): 192–93; Hans-Joachim Kraus, "Tore der Gerechtigkeit," in *Ernten, was man sät: Festschrift für Klaus Koch zu seinem 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Dwight R. Daniels, Uwe Glessmer and Martin Rösel; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991), 265–72; Klaus Koch, "Tempeleinlassliturgien und Dekalogue," in *Studien zur Theologie der alttestamentliche Überlieferungen* (ed. Rolf Rendtorff and Klaus Koch; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1961), 50–51; Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (2 vols. in one; trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), 1:177–80. Strictly speaking, the first question in v. 3 implies that the pilgrim has not yet begun the physical ascent of the mountain. Thus the question cannot be part of a liturgy spoken at the door of the Temple, which was imagined to be on the summit of the mountain; see Steingrimsson, *Tor der Gerechtigkeit*, 79, 88. L. Delekat considered these to be questions put to people seeking asylum in the sanctuary; see Delekat, *Asylie und Schutzorakel am Zionheiligtum: Eine Untersuchung zu den Privaten Feindpsalmen* (Leiden: Brill, 1967), esp. 167–69. This view, as well as the classification "Entrance Liturgy," was strongly criticized by O. Garcia de la Fuente, who argued that the verses were typical of prophetic moral and spiritual exhortation; see Garcia de la Fuente, "Liturgias de Entrada, Normas de Asilo o Exhortationes Proféticas. A Propósito de los Salmos 15 y 24," *Aug* 9 (1969): 266–98.

has attracted less speculation.[9] These proposals are not without their problems.[10] For example, it is hard to imagine how the qualities expressed in v. 4 would be used in practice to discriminate among potential worshippers, as they are of a general, subjective nature and consequently difficult to verify objectively.[11] No explicit record of the festival connected with vv. 7–10 remains, and there is much disagreement as to its identification, significance and constituent rituals.[12]

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[9] It is often seen as an allusion to the outcome of the battle with chaos, although nowhere does the psalm describe the conflict; see John Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament* (UCOP 34; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 37–38. Hermann Spieckermann has located vv. 1–2 on the trajectory of pan-entheism in the Hebrew Bible, cf. Is 6:3; see Spieckermann, "'Die ganze Erde ist seiner Herrlichkeit voll' – Pantheismus im Alten Testament?," *ZTK* 87 (1990): 415–36, esp. 419–23, or, for a discussion of the original form and setting of the complete psalm, idem, *Heilsgegenwart: Eine Theologie der Psalmen* (FRLANT 148; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), 196–208.

[10] For an extensive critique of the dominant scholarly approach to this psalm; see John T. Willis, "Ethics in a Cultic Setting," in *Essays in Old Testament Ethics* (ed. James L. Crenshaw and John T. Willis; New York: Ktav, 1974), 145–69.

[11] This difficulty has led to the suggestions that the verses were intended to create a mood appropriate for worship, or to remind worshippers (or perhaps priests) of their ethical obligations. See Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 2:68; Nahum M. Sarna, *Songs of the Heart: An Introduction to the Book of Psalms* (New York: Schocken, 1993), 103–8; and also Willis, "Ethics," 156–58. In this case, however, the form is secondary. It has become detached from its generative setting and now serves a new function subservient to the intentions of the poet, perhaps even in a setting far removed from the Temple; see Ronald. E. Clements, "Worship and Ethics: A Re-Examination of Ps 15," in *Worship in the Hebrew Bible: Essays in Honour of John T. Willis* (ed. M. Patrick Graham, Rick R. Marrs and Steven L. McKenzie; JSOTSup 284; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 94; John G. Gammie, *Holiness in Israel* (OBT; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 132–33; also n. 38 below. An eschatological interpretation of the psalm has been proposed by James D. Smart, "The Eschatological Interpretation of Psalm 24," *JBL* 52 (1933): 175–80.

[12] Proposals include that the psalm was used at an annual enthronement festival, (Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 1: 170–72); in a celebration of the transport of the ark to Jerusalem (Gunkel, *Introduction*, 315–16); or at the rededication of the Temple by Judas Maccabeus (Marco Treves, "Date of Psalm 24," *VT* 10 [1960]: 428–34). A summary of the various positions can be found in Cooper, "Ps 24," 38–39. For a recent critique of Cooper's mythological explanation and a defense of a processional setting, see Oswald Loretz, *Ugarit-Texte und Thronbesteigungspsalmen: Die Metamorphose des Regenspenders Baal-Jahwe (Ps 24, 7–10; 29; 47; 93; 95–100 sowie Ps 77, 17–20; 114): Erweiterte Neuaufglage von "Psalm 29. Kanaanäische El und Baaltraditionen in jüdischer Sicht" (UBL 2.1984)* (UBL 7; Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 1988), 249–74. As well as identifying the festival, proponents of a processional setting face other questions. What mythology or ideology lay behind it (chaos-battle or holy war)? How was Yahweh's presence represented (by Ark, throne, statue, if at all)? Where were the gates located (city, earthly Temple, heavenly Temple)? How was the ritual performed (antiphonally, addressing gates or gatekeepers)? What was the function and significance of the questions and the titles? See, on the procession, Delbert R. Hillers,

Much of this speculation is peripheral to the present study. The interest of scholars has been concentrated on the original situation and early use of the psalm. The interpretation of the psalm in the late Second Temple period and its setting in the Tamid service has been largely ignored.[13] From the perspective of the present study, the cultic setting of the psalm is known and does not need to be postulated; the psalm was sung on Sunday at the conclusion of the Tamid service. The performance of the complete psalm at this service would have encouraged a holistic interpretation of the psalm, one which saw the parts in relation to each other and the immediate liturgical setting. In this context, the psalm would be seen as a liturgical unity.[14]

Clear differences among the three sections of the psalm have motivated many scholars to suggest that the psalm is a composite. However,

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"Ritual Procession of the Ark and Ps 132," *CBQ* 30 (1968): 48–55; Loretz, *Ugarit-Texte*, esp. 269; Johann Maier, *Das altisraelitische Ladeheiligtum* (BZAW 93; Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1965), 76–79, and on the title Yahweh Sabbaoth, C. L. Seow, "Hosts, Lord of," *ABD* 3:304–7 (and the references there); and the works of Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies* (ConBOT 18; Uppsala: CWK Gleerup, 1982); idem, "YHWH SABAOTH – The Heavenly King on the Cherub Throne," in *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays* (ed. Tomoo Ishida; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1982), 109–38; idem, "In Search of the Hidden Structure: YHWH as King in Isaiah 40–55," *SEÅ* 31 (1986): 140–60; idem, *In Search of God: The Meaning and Message of the Everlasting Names* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988).

[13] Exceptions here are Treves, "Date," and Nic Tromp, "Jacob in Psalm 24: Apposition, Aphaeresis or Apostrophe?," in *Von Kanaan bis Kerala: Festschrift für Prof. Mag. Dr. Dr. J. P. M. van der Ploeg O. P. zur Vollendung des siebzigsten Lebensjahres am 4. Juli 1979: Überreicht von Kollegen, Freunden und Schülern.* (ed. W. C. Delsman et al.; AOAT 211; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1982), 271–82. Treves' case relies on a literal reading of the text (e.g., the adjective "ancient" implies that the gates are physically very old), the assumption that the psalm was composed for a particular event, rather than for regular commemorative use (or to mimic an earlier form), and the supposed absence of ANE parallels to some of the features of the dialogue. See further Paul-Richar Berger, "Zu Ps 24, 7 und 9," *UF* 2 (1970): 335–36; Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1–50* (WBC 19; Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1983), 213. Tromp attempts to relate v. 6, but not the whole psalm, to popular expectations in the late Second Temple period.

[14] Proponents of a processional setting for the psalm often also support its unity on liturgical grounds, arguing that if one section were associated with a ritual, then the other parts were also performed in the same festival, albeit at different times and by different agents. See, e.g., Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 1:177; Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1–59: A Commentary* (trans. Hilton C. Oswald; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), 312; Gerstenberger, *Psalms 1*, 118–9. This approach runs close to circularity: the psalm is a unity from its use in a hypothetical festival and the rituals of the festival are inferred from the psalm.

there are several points of contact between the different parts of the psalm which can be taken as indicators for its unity.[15] Linkages between the sections appear on lexical, grammatical, structural and thematic levels. Most evidence can be produced for the larger second and third sections. These are tied through the repetition of נשׂא (vv. 4, 5, 7, 9), questions starting with מי (vv. 3, 8, 10), the use of זה (vv. 6, 8, 10), of body language (כף, לב, נפשׁ, פנים and ראשׁ), and the motif of seeking entry. The first section can be linked to the second through the use of geographical terms (ארץ, תבל, הר, and מקום in vv. 1–3) and the words על and עלה in vv. 2–3, which in addition to sounding similar share the semantic nuance of vertical differentiation. A strong thematic connection also exists between these two sections: the Temple represents the prime earthly example of a place which is founded on the waters and the property of Yahweh.[16] Differentiation on a vertical axis appears in all three sections of the psalm – the world is founded upon water, the pilgrim ascends the hill, and the gates lift up their heads. This is accompanied by a narrowing of the spatial (geographical) axis from world, to hill, to gates. The whole psalm also lies within an inclusion formed by the divine name in vv. 1, 10.

The psalm opens with a hymnic declaration of Yahweh's ownership of the cosmos (v. 1), explained as the consequence of the divine role in the creation of the world (v. 2). There is nothing particularly

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[15] Arguments for the unity of the psalm can be found in Pierre Auffret, "Qui est ce Roi de la Gloire? – Étude Structurelle du Ps 24," *RThom* 90 (1990): 101–8; Botha, "Psalm 24"; Jannie du Preez, "Mission Perspectives in an Old Testament Procession Song: Psalm 24," *Missionalia* 18 (1990): 330; Smart, "Psalm 24," 180; Treves, "Date," 433–34; Willis, "Ethics," 150; Yair Mazor, "Psalm 24: Sense and Sensibility in Biblical Composition," *SJOT* 2 (1993): 303–16; Vincente Vilar-Hueso, "El Salmo 24: unidad literaria y ambiente histórico," *EstBib* 22 (1963): 245–46. Auffret gives a detailed structural analysis of the psalm (105–8).

[16] See below, n. 20. It has been suggested that the first and third sections share conceptions associated with the mythology of the battle with chaos, namely that the third section recalls Yahweh's victorious return after this battle, while the first alludes to another outcome of the battle, the creation of the world upon the carcass of the defeated sea. Perception of this link depends upon acceptance of a certain mythological basis for the psalm, a basis which is far from certain, and the assumption that this tradition exerted a powerful influence over psalm interpretation in the late Second Temple period. However, here, as elsewhere, alternative explicative configurations are possible. Its absolute antithesis is found in the *Midrash Tehillim* on Ps 93, where the eternal foundation of the world on the waters is seen as the reward for *homage* shown to Yahweh by the waters; see below on Ps 93.

unusual in these two verses with regard to thought or vocabulary.[17] The psalm is operating within the ancient cosmology of a universe built in layers, with the earth in the middle, the heavens above and underneath the chaotic waters of the deep (ים, נהר). The paradoxical contrast inherent in the image of firm foundations resting on fluid waters testifies to the power of the creator who placed them there and maintains them thus.[18] The identity of Yahweh as creator is emphasized in v. 2 by the explicit use of the pronoun.

In comparison with other psalms, the opening of this one is rather abrupt. There is no invocation of the deity or call to the people. Also, on the surface, the transition to the site of God's Temple in v. 3 appears unmotivated. How do the opening verses function as an introduction to the psalm and, in particular, to the following section vv. 3–6? The answer to this question lies in the two motifs that dominate the opening: the property of Yahweh and foundation upon the waters.[19] Although, as the opening verses assert, both of these characteristics are possessed by the whole world, yet there was one special place in the world that embodied them to a higher degree. This was the Jerusalem Temple, the earthly sanctuary of the deity.[20]

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[17] On the vocabulary, see Peter L. Trudinger, "The Psalms of the Tamid Service" (Ph.D. diss.: Emory University, 2002), 73 n. 20.

[18] Hermann Gunkel, "Psalm 24: An Interpretation," *Biblical World* 2 (1903): 367. On the grammatical structure of vv. 1–2, see Martin Metzger, "Eigentumsdeklaration und Schöpfungsaussage," in *Wenn nicht jetzt, wann dann? Aufsätze für Hans-Joachim Kraus zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Hans-Georg Geyer et al.; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1983), 37–51, esp. 39–40.

[19] Sarna has noted that the connotation of providential protection in the first two verses is also echoed in the following sections, in v. 5 and the military metaphors of vv. 7–10 (*Songs of the Heart*, 131–33). This link, while present, is weaker than the one suggested here, since it relies on a motif (of creation-battle) hidden beneath the introduction, not explicitly stated in it; see n. 16.

[20] The Temple and its environs (the hill on which it sat and the city of Jerusalem) were at the center of a complex of traditions. In various forms these traditions existed in Ancient Israel, were inherited by the community of the Second Temple and persisted after the close of that period in both Christian and Jewish thought. At their core lay the belief that Yahweh was associated with this site in an extraordinary way. Diverse traditions represented outworkings of the implications of this belief: The Temple was the nodal point in space and time. Creation and Eschaton intersected there. The mountain on which it stood was the highest point on earth, yet just below the Temple floor lay the depths of the world. The divine presence joined the mundane place with the supernal. Language appropriate to heaven and paradise was also applied to the Temple. In many ways these traditions are congruent to those about sacred places found in other cultures in the ANE and elsewhere concerning what is termed the navel or axis of the world (*omphalos, axis mundi*).

The tradition that the Temple and by extension, its immediate environs, Mt. Zion and Jerusalem, had a special relationship with Yahweh is found at innumerable points in the Hebrew Bible. The city was thought to have a proximity to Yahweh unlike that of other places. The Temple somehow participated in the essence of the heavenly temple, the residence of Yahweh.[21] The relationship between Yahweh and this sacred site is depicted in several ways – for instance through the assertion of the presence of Yahweh (Ps 46:5–6; Ps 48; Ezek 48:35; Is 6:1), through the metaphor of marriage (e.g., Is 49:14–16; 60:1–5) and perhaps most frequently, by the use of possessive constructions, as in v. 3 (cf. Is 60:14).

Only those traditions relevant to the passage under study will be considered here. The literature on the "Zion traditions" is extensive. See Richard J. Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament* (HSM 4; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972); Ben C. Ollenburger, *Zion, the City of the Great King: A Theological Symbol of the Jerusalem Cult* (JSOTSup 41; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987); J. J. M. Roberts, "Zion in the Theology of the Davidic-Solomonic Empire," in *Studies in the Period of David and Solomon and Other Essays: Papers Read at the International Symposium for Biblical Studies, Tokyo, 5–7 December, 1979* (ed. Tomoo Ishida; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1982), 93–108; for their development in Israel, see Bernd Janowski, "Tempel und Schöpfung: Schöpfungstheologische Aspekte der priesterschriftlichen Heiligtumskonzeption," in *Schöpfung und Neuschöpfung* (ed. Ingo Baldermann et al.; JBTh 5; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990), 37–45; Jon D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Winston Press, 1985), 111–76; idem, "The Temple and the World," *JR* 64 (1984): 282–91; Julian Morgenstern, "Psalm 48," *HUCA* 16 (1941): 47–87, esp. 85; Jeffrey L. Rubenstein, "The History of Sukkot During the Second Temple and Rabbinic Periods: Studies in the Continuity and Change of a Festival" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1992), 203–19; idem, *The History of Sukkot in the Second Temple and Rabbinic Periods* (BJS 302; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 122–31; Peter Schäfer, "Tempel und Schöpfung: Zur Interpretationen einiger Heiligtumstraditionen in der rabbinischen Literatur," *Kairos* 10 (1974): 122–33. Comparative material on the "navel of the world" is utilized by S. Terrien, "The Omphalos Myth and Hebrew Religion," *VT* 20 (1970): 315–38; see also A. J. Wensinck, *The Ideas of the Western Semites Concerning the Navel of the Earth* (Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam, Afdeeling Letterkunde; New Series 17/1; Amsterdam: Johannes Müller, 1916); the presence of this concept in the Hebrew Bible is contested by Shemaryahu Talmon, "The 'Navel of the Earth' and the Comparative Method," in *Scripture in History and Theology: Essays in Honor of J. Coert Rylaadsdam* (ed. Arthur I. Merrill and Thomas W. Overholt; Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1977), 243–68; idem, "The 'Comparative Method' in Biblical Interpretation – Principles and Problems," in *Congress Volume: Göttingen 1977* (ed. J. A. Emerton; VTSup 29; Leiden: Brill, 1977), 348–51; see also the reply in Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 115–17. The term Zion is often used when the supernatural aspects of Temple, hill or city are in view.

[21] Martin Metzger, "Himmlische und irdische Wohnstatt Jahwes," *UF* 2 (1970): 144; see also Janowski, "Tempel und Schöpfung," 37, 44.

Evidence also exists for a tradition that the foundations of the Temple rested directly upon the waters in the depths of the earth.[22] This is stated most clearly in rabbinic literature, where, for example, a story is told of how David encountered the waters whilst digging the foundation for the Temple and then controlled their height in order to provide irrigation for the world (*b. Sukkah* 53a, b, see also *y. Sanh.* 17:2, 29a). The Temple was thus the place where the waters below the earth most nearly approached the surface. There are hints of this in some of the later prophets, who envision the Temple as the outlet for fructifying waters whose source can only be the waters of the deep under the world (Ezek 47:1–2; Joel 3:18; Zech 8:14). Apocryphal writings also contain the motif of the holy mountain as a point of proximity to cosmic height and depth. In the book of Jubilees, composed in the late Second Temple period (perhaps in the 2nd century B.C.E.), Mt Zion is described as the "the centre of the navel of the earth," a place where the fabric of creation is thin and the primeval realities of the deep and the sky touch the created order (*Jub.* 8:19). In 1 Enoch, Book 1, a section of the work which is also dated to the Second Temple period (3rd century B.C.E. or earlier), there are recorded two trips to holy mountain(s) where heaven and the deeps are contiguous, although neither site is explicitly identified as Mt Zion (*1 En.* 17–18; 24:1–26:5). The combined weight of this evidence suggests that, at the very least, in the late Second Temple period, the Temple would have been conceived of as being founded upon the seas of the deep and fixed upon the rivers of the underworld in a more immediate way than any other place on earth. Close below it lay the chaotic waters of the deep on which the whole world sat.

The transition from vv. 1–2 to v. 3 and the rest of the psalm is one of particularization.[23] Having set the scene in a general way – the world as artifact and possession of Yahweh – the poet can then move to the place that epitomizes these properties. It is a technique

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[22] See the discussions in Rubenstein, "History of Sukkot: Continuity and Change," 207–13; Rubenstein, *History of Sukkot*, 123–27; Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 133–34; Patai, *Man and Temple in Ancient Jewish Myth and Ritual* (2d ed. New York: KTAV, 1967), 84.

[23] David J. A. Clines judges there to be a tension between v. 1 and 3, "Although the whole world belongs to the Lord (v. 1), it is not all 'holy'," since that property is reserved for Zion; see Clines, "A World Established on Water (Psalm 24): Reader-Response, Deconstruction and Bespoke Interpretation," in *The New Literary Criticism and the Hebrew Bible* (ed. J. Cheryl Exum and David J. A. Clines; JSOTSup 143;

often used in cinema today. A movie may commence with a broad view of a landscape (perhaps lush mountains, perhaps a desert) with no real details visible but enough information to identify the nature of the location and its salient features, and then zoom in to a small part of it, where the action takes place (perhaps a nun singing on a hill, or two robots on a dusty road). In an analogous way, the psalmist starts with a static image of the world, where the only identifying features are its possession by Yahweh and grounding on the depths, and then in the gap between vv. 2 and 3 zooms in to the nodal point of creation.[24]

At the same time the characters are seen and the action starts. In the second section, human actors appear, namely the righteous pilgrim, the epitome of created things (Ps 8:4–8); in the third section, Yahweh himself appears. The psalm now takes on a dynamic aspect. The pilgrims desire to ascend the mountain, and, later, Yahweh approaches to enter through the gates. The scene and action in vv. 3–10, however, are presented in an indirect manner. They are to be inferred from the exhortation and commands with only minimal supporting narrative information, rather than presented by direct description of activity. The "catechism" in vv. 3–6 could be spoken anywhere, not just at the foot of the Temple Mount, and the command to the gates to open for Yahweh does not require that the Lord be immediately present, only that preparations for entry are made.[25] The emphasis falls on the qualities assigned to the actors, and not the setting.

The second section opens with a double question.[26] The two parts of v. 3, while parallel, are not synonymous, for they imply a change of location from the base of the hill into the sanctuary.[27] Thus v. 3

Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 83. In his reading strategy he holds the meaning of holiness (and other terms) fixed and univocal throughout the psalm. Yet, on the contrary, Clines's observation can be turned on its head to show the complexity of the meaning of "holiness" and to support the claim that Zion had a special status, i.e., all places are holy, but one place is holy in a different way. "The fact is that the Temple and the world, God's localization and his ubiquity, are not *generally* perceived in the Hebrew Bible as standing in tension," Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 138.

[24] Similarly Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 171.

[25] A strike against a processional setting for the psalm.

[26] A detailed structuralist and linguistic analysis of vv. 3–5 has been performed by Steingrimsson, *Tor der Gerechtigkeit*, 70–93.

[27] The pair "mountain of the Lord" and "his holy place" occur in parallel only in this psalm; see further Trudinger, "Psalms," 77 n. 33.

in its two parts replays the process of pilgrimage up to the Temple at the same time as it asks about those who perform this pilgrimage. The questions themselves give no hint of the type of answer they will receive. A satisfactory response might equally well state cultic requirements to bring sacrifice, the need for sturdy shoes for the ascent, or the ethnic origins of pilgrims (compare v. 3a with Is 2:3b = Mic 4:2b). The answer that is given concerns individual behavioral norms (v. 4).[28] The first two of these, in v. 4ab, are rather general prescriptions that amount to the requirement for moral behavior in deed and intention.[29] The interpretation of the next two (v. 4cd) is not so clear cut. The range of meanings for שׁוא is broad. It can indicate an idol (Ps 26:4; 31:7), but also has the more general sense of something of no use (Ps 60:13 = 108:13; 89:48; 119:37; 127:1–2), or, in relation to speech, of lies (Ps 12:3; 41:7; 139:20; 148:8, 11). The context in Ps 24 seems to draw on the breadth of its semantic range, since the last requirement (v. 4d) appears to move into the arena of speech, whereas the one preceding (v. 4c) concerns intentions.[30] The word מרמה, found in v. 4d, might also refer to idols. However in the Psalms it routinely occurs in the context of false or malicious speech (Ps 10:7; 17:1; 34:14; 35:20; 36:4; 38:13; 50:19; 52:6; 55:12; 109:2, cf. Ps 5:7; 43:1; 55:24). The LXX renders it in this verse as δόλος (treachery). Thus the notion of deceit may be preferred here.[31]

The next verse (v. 5) promises a reward for those who qualify for and make this pilgrimage into the sanctuary. They will receive ברכה

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[28] Similar question and answer forms are found in Ps 15 and Is 33:14–16; see Steingrimsson, *Tor der Gerechtigkeit*. In other passages there is a hint that, at least in the opinion of some, many who entered the Temple fell far short of these norms (e.g., Eccl 8:10 and perhaps also Jer 26:2–6).

[29] See M. Dijkstra, "A Ugaritic Pendant of the Biblical Expression 'Pure in Heart' (Ps 24:4; 73:1)," *UF* 8 (1976): 440; Vincent Hamp, "בָּרַר barar; בַּר bar; בֹּר bor; בֹּרִית borith," *TDOT* 2:309–10.

[30] The conditions in v. 4 have been tied to the commandment against false oaths, for example, Timo Veijola sees both vv. 4c, d as parallel condemnations of perjury; see Veijola, "Das dritte Gebot (Namenverbot) im Lichte einer ägyptischen Parallele," *ZAW* 103 (1991): 6–9; also Herbert C. Brichto, *The Problem of "Curse" in the Hebrew Bible* (JBLMS 13; Philadelphia: SBL, 1963), 66–67; Bernhard Lang, "Das Verbot des Meineids im Dekalog," *TQ* 161 (1981): 97–105.

[31] With this interpretation, the four requirements in v. 4 form a loose chiastic structure with public actions (clean hands, clean speech) framing internal orientation. False accusations could be as injurious to a person as physical assault, or even more so.

and צדקה. Beyond this, however, the detail of the reward is not spelled out. This is odd. Frequently in psalms, the content of the blessing is given.[32] The term צדקה does not help define the reward, as it has various meanings – loyalty, justice, entitlement, victory, and, in late Hebrew and Aramaic, generosity – and it is unclear which aspect might predominate here.[33] The parallel between blessing and gift fits the context well. The lack of specificity might be intentional. Although the temptation is to fill in the content of the reward promised in this verse, it may be that the psalmist deliberately left the matter open, perhaps in this way hinting that the payoff is whatever the pilgrim's heart desires.[34]

There is a play on the word נשׂא between vv. 4 and 5. The person who has not lifted up their soul improperly will have the opportunity to lift up a blessing. This observation can be developed further. Four of the five finite verbs in vv. 3–5 carry the nuance of upward movement. The one who has not lifted up their soul improperly is the one who is able to move up the mountain, stand up in the sanctuary and lift up a blessing. The dynamics of the pilgrim life are characterized by upward movement.

As was noted above, several textual difficulties are present in v. 6 which complicate translation and interpretation.[35] The keywords in the verse, בקשׁ and דרשׁ, frequently appear in parallel and when used of humans with God as object, indicate a positive commitment to Yahweh, associated with participation in worship, possibly as a petitioner.[36] The verse is most likely another categorization of that type of person described in vv. 4–5 in answer the questions of v. 3. As such, it is a closing response to v. 3. However, it differs from the preceding verses in that it is couched in terms of the group (using the plural) rather than the individual. Also, the nuance of upward movement that previously characterized the individual has

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[32] A discussion of blessings in the psalms is found in Gunkel, *Introduction*, 222–31. A list of the contents typically found in blessings and derived from a sample of 34 blessings is on p. 229.

[33] See the entries in HALOT and, for late use, Jastrow.

[34] Since military might figures in the third section of the psalm, it might be inferred that military nuances of צדקה are also in mind in v. 5. Nevertheless, all that the third section demonstrates is that Yahweh is powerful enough to deliver on the promise of v. 5; it does not elucidate the content of the promise.

[35] See notes on v. 6.

[36] Siegfried Wagner, *TDOT* 2:229–41, esp. 236–39; idem, "דָּרַשׁ darash; מִדְרָשׁ midrash," *TDOT* 3:293–307, esp. 298–304.

been replaced by horizontal motion (seeking and turning to God). In the third section, horizontal motion is also predicated of God (בוא). Does its presence in v. 6 merely serve as a point of contact between the two literary sections of the psalm, or might it also indicate that with the receipt of blessing the pilgrim has ascended to some higher level of communion with the divine?[37]

Although vv. 3–6 are cast in the form of an entrance liturgy, they clearly did not function as such in the setting of the Tamid service, if at all.[38] What then is their role? What effect might the second section of the psalm have had on its audience? These verses would have been heard by people who were present in the Temple to serve or worship. Such an audience would be expected to identify itself with the ones mentioned in vv. 3, 6 of the psalm, who wish to ascend the holy hill and who seek God. Thus the statements in vv. 4, 5 would have been directly applicable to them. One can see two ways in which this particular audience may have appropriated these statements. On the one hand, vv. 4–5 serve as exhortation to live the sort of life whose boundaries are characterized in broad terms by the norms of v. 4 by promising a reward to those who adopt this lifestyle (v. 5).[39]

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[37] On the motif of human achievement of divine or angelic status in early apocalyptic works, see Martha Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[38] For evidence concerning the existence of entrance liturgies in Israel and ANE, see the summaries in Sarna, *Songs of the Heart*, 100–3 and Willis, "Ethics," 148–50. Comparative studies provide evidence of liturgies concerned with cultic matters, whereas Ps 24:3–6 and Ps 15 state ethical requirements. If one accepts Ps 15 and Ps 24:3–6 as examples of entrance liturgies, then it becomes necessary to explain this difference. Sarna imagines that the cultic requirements were so well-known as to not warrant mention (103, 107). Others posit a process of development in which ethical norms entered the cult and replaced traditional cultic requirements. How the two psalms fit into this process is debated. See, e.g., Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 1:177–80; Koch, "Tempeleinlassliturgien," 48–52; Kraus, "Tore"; Eckart Otto, "Kultus und Ethos in Jerusalemer Theologie: ein Beitrag zur theologischen Begründung der Ethik im Alten Testament," *ZAW* 98 (1986): 161–79; and the summary in Clements, "Worship and Ethics," 82–85. Yet another approach looks for social scientific explanations of the function of the ethical requirements in these two psalms. Both Clements and Otto have argued that they serve a role in stabilizing society by giving divine legitimation to behavioral norms. Otto sees these links between cult and ethics as arising from a process of changing political structures, from family group to state; see Otto, "Kultus," 172–76. Clements emphasizes the feeling of corporate identity promoted by such questions. See n. 40 and also Clements, "Worship and Ethics," 87–90.

[39] Similarly on Ps 15, see Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 172–76. The ascent to Zion was "a way of entering a different kind of existence" (175) that was delineated in

On the other hand, since these verses were being performed in the *Temple* precincts, their audience consisted of people who in one sense had already made the journey into the holy place and sought God. From such a perspective, the statements of vv. 4–5 already characterized them – they were pure of heart and clean of hands and stood assured that the blessing rested on them. Thus the section reinforces a feeling of confidence in belonging to the community of God. These two ways of appropriating the second section of the psalm are not exclusive. They can operate together, generating positive feedback to people who had already identified themselves as worshippers of Yahweh and assisting them to continue in this course.[40]

The third section has been the subject of much speculation concerning its cultic or mythological background. The theories advanced tend to be rather precise. However, their value for the present study is not at all clear. Several centuries separated the Tamid service in the late Second Temple from the time of composition and original use of the psalm. Is it likely that the person listening to these psalms early in the morning in the Temple, or even performing them, would have immediately remembered an (otherwise unrecorded) procession with Ark or cherub throne, or called to mind a few lines of the Baal-Anat cycle when v. 7 was sung?[41]

Most studies tend to focus on the two issues of the identification of the gates and the function performed by the dialogue.[42] This study will take a different tack and attempt to operate within the confines of the psalm itself and its setting in the Tamid service.

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part by the norms in v. 4. "Die 'Tore der Gerechtigkeit' sind eine Heilssphäre, nicht eine Kontrollstation" (Kraus, "Tore," 268).

[40] Clements, in the process of reflecting on the historical development of the relation between morality, cult and law, has reached similar conclusions concerning Ps 15: "the two questions with which Psalm 15 commences were conscious archaisms designed to express membership and strong emotional identity with the loyal communities of Judaism" ("Worship and Ethics," 92), and the psalm itself promoted "a lifestyle of integrity and moral decency" (93). Botha also interprets the psalm as bolstering a feeling of solidarity with Yahweh ("Psalm 24," 366–67). As Levenson has written, "The protestations of innocence that those 'entrance liturgies' contain are expressions, not of self-righteousness, but of self-transcendence, the wish of the lower person, the historical person, to put on a higher self in worship, a self that befits the perfect place, the perfect world, to which he [sic] begs admission" ("Temple and World," 298).

[41] On the procession, see n. 12. The allusion to the Baal-Anat cycle was suggested by Frank M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), 97–98.

[42] The observation depends on Cooper, "Ps 24," 40.

The section is constructed in two parallel parts. There is a high degree of repetition. Verses 7 and 9 are identical for all practical purposes; v. 10a is almost identical to v. 8a, differing only in the addition of an emphatic pronoun; vv. 8b and 10b both contain titles for Yahweh; but vv. 8c and 10c differ considerably. As the psalm unfolds, the repetition gradually breaks down, creating a dramatic effect that builds to a climax in the last part of v. 10, the identification of Yahweh as the Glorious King.

The repetition, and its absence, divide the last part of the psalm into two: those verses that are constant (vv. 7, 9) and those that change (vv. 8, 10). The difference is analogous to that between background and foreground. The background verses provide the setting, but the real import comes from the foreground, where the development takes place. The foreground verses (vv. 8, 10) consist largely of epithets of Yahweh, culminating with ascription of the title Glorious King. It is cast in question and answer form: "Who is the Glorious King? Yahweh, [military epithets], is the Glorious King!"[43] The section therefore is primarily concerned with praise of Yahweh through the ascription of glory, strength and military prowess.[44]

The section does not explain how Yahweh gained the military epithets. No battle is mentioned. In particular, the psalm does not indicate in any way that Yahweh is coming from a recent fighting engagement. Any conjecture about some recent creation battle or holy war moves beyond this text. Indeed, the use of the epithets may be conventional. More important than the origin of the epithets is their function. Regardless of how the epithets were won, their presence within the psalm serves to assure the audience that Yahweh is able to deliver on the promise made in v. 5.

The title "Glorious king," מלך הכבוד, is curious. It occurs only here in the Hebrew Bible, and rarely in other literature of the late Second Temple period. The word כבוד can be applied to humans or God in a wide variety of ways. In essence, it "denotes that which makes [a person] impressive and demands recognition."[45] When

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[43] The question is rhetorical. Any innovative force it might have had once would have been lost over decades of constant repetition. On the history of intepretation of these verses, see n. 7.

[44] The primary military epithet is יהוה צבאות. This title has been much studied; see, e.g., Seow, "Hosts." It combines the warrior and royal aspects of the deity.

[45] Gerhard von Rad, "δόξα: כבוד in the OT," *TDNT* 2:238–42, esp. 238.

applied to God, it can take this sense, or the extraordinary sense of the divine presence in a theophany (Ezek 1:26, 28). With כבוד construed in a broad sense, the title מלך הכבוד could easily be applied to an earthly ruler ("the most magnificent monarch"). Its use in the psalm leaves open the identity of the one who comes, implying perhaps no more than the arrival of a great human pilgrim. In this way it preserves the climax for v. 10. However, once that climax is reached, and Yahweh Sabaoth is identified as the glorious king, the divine connotations of the term כבוד come into play, creating the anticipation of a theophany for the pilgrims at some point beyond the close of the psalm.

The background verses (vv. 7, 9) sketch a scene which is secondary to the climactic identification of Yahweh. That scene comprises two parts. First, the gates are asked to lift their heads. In view of the setting of the Tamid service in the Temple and the setting of v. 3, it seems most likely that the gates represent the gates of the Temple.[46] Most commentators construe this as a command to open, but the expression is odd, since gates pivoted on hinges set in their side.[47] The reason for the peculiar expression might lie within the language of the psalm itself. The verb נשׂא has appeared before in the psalm. It is one of the set of words describing the upward movement of the righteous pilgrims who seek Yahweh. Might it be that its presence here indicates that the gates are to participate in the same process of ascent as the pilgrims, and share in worship and blessing?[48] Of course, the gates, as part of a fixed structure, cannot climb

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[46] The question of whether it is the earthly or heavenly Temple is something of a red-herring, since the distinction between the two was blurred. In the targum to the Psalms (TgSal), the gates are explicitly identfied in v. 7 as those of the Temple and in v. 9 as those of Eden; see Luis Díez Merino, *Targum de Salmos: Edición Príncipe del Ms. Villa-Amil n. 5 de Alfonso de Zamora* (BHB 6. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas Instituto "Francisco Suarez," 1982).

[47] Minority positions include the suggestion that the instruction is to the gates to physically raise their lintels, since they were too small for the king; see Metzger, "Wohnstatt," 144; du Preez, "Mission," 338; also Loretz, *Ugarit-Texte*, 259–63; that they rise up out of the debris of the earth in which they were buried (Lam 2:9); see n. 7, and Raymond J. Tournay, *Seeing and Hearing God with the Psalms: The Prophetic Liturgy of the Second Temple in Jerusalem* (trans. J. Edward Crowley; JSOTSup 118; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 127; or that this unique method of pivoting was attributed to the doors of the celestial temple in ancient times, see Sarna, *Songs of the Heart*, 133–34.

[48] In v. 1, two classes were mentioned as the property of Yahweh: the fullness of the earth and the inhabitants of the world. The second section, vv. 3–6, focussed on human beings, the epitome of the living things inhabiting the world. Now in

a hill, like pilgrims. They can, however, swing open in praise to receive divine instruction and blessing. A parallel is found in the *Songs of Sabbath Sacrifice*, where various architectural parts of the Temple, including the gates, are described as praising God (4Q405 23 I, 6–10; 4Q403 1 I, 38–45).[49]

The other event in the scene is the announcement that someone – the Glorious King – is coming. The word בוא used here represents movement on a horizontal plane, and so carries a different connotation from the words used previously in regard to the movement of the pilgrims and gates. It hints that the expected person is of a different nature to pilgrim or gates. That person is coming. An encounter with the gates, open or closed, is certain. It is also worth noting that the psalm says *only* that this Glorious King is coming. It does not indicate when. In particular, it does not imply that the Glorious King is *now* present at the gates in any guise.[50] Further, the performance of the Tamid service was predicated on the presence of Yahweh in the Temple. In that context, the *coming* of the Glorious King would not occur in the present. The event referred to is either past or future. The psalm leaves the time of the coming open. It may celebrate an historical, or a mythological entry of Yahweh, or look forward to some eschatological re-entry.[51] It may be that no single one of these was intended at the Tamid service, but that the hearers interpreted the psalm as they were wont.

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vv. 7–10 an inanimate agent, the gates, is introduced, albeit personified. Do the gates represent the other category, the fullness of the earth, which is now also encouraged to worship? If the gates were the gates of the Temple, and perhaps the Temple itself through synecdoche, the analogy with humans might be taken further, as the Temple could be considered the epitome of inanimate things.

[49] The passage 4Q405 23 I, 6–10 uses the same words for gates as Ps 24, שער, פתח. Carol A. Newsom suggests that the passage is dependent on Ps 24. This supports the reading given here of Ps 24 as a call for human and non-human praise. See Newsom, "Shirot Olat HaShabbat," in *Qumran Cave 4: VI Poetical and Liturgical Texts, Part 1* (DJD 11; ed. Esther Eshel et al.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 359.

[50] There is no reference to ark, throne, cult statue, or procession. The words could just as well be spoken to the gates from someone inside, cf. Is 62:6. Thomas B. Dozeman observes that the mountain Zion can function as a metaphor for God's presence. Psalm 24 qualifies this observation by showing that this presence ought not to be characterized in every instance as a static property of Zion; see Dozeman, *God on the Mountain: A Study of Redaction, Theology and Canon in Exodus 19–24* (SBLMS 37; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 29–32.

[51] Hans Strauss, who puts the psalm in a postexilic setting, finds in it an assurance that Yahweh's glory is present in the Second Temple, despite the destruction of Solomon's Temple and the loss of symbols such as the Ark; see Strauss, *Gott*

Combining these two observations leads to the conclusion that the background scene (vv. 7, 9) is a call to prepare to give homage to one who is coming. The foreground (vv. 8, 10) actualizes homage in the form of praise of Yahweh. It connects to the background by identifying the coming one as Yahweh, arriving in power and glory. Taken together, foreground and background anticipate a theophany for those who worship.

What motifs are present in the psalm and what is its theme? The differences between the three sections of the psalm complicate distillation of a theme.[52] Individual motifs can be readily identified. Four of these are significant: a motif of ownership of the cosmos by Yahweh which is based on creation or establishment (vv. 1–2) and reinforced by the title "king" (vv. 7–10), a motif of appropriate behavior and its reward (vv. 3–6), a motif of the ongoing power and glory of Yahweh (vv. 2, 8, 10), and a motif of movement and approach (upwards and towards, which recurs in the verbs of vv. 3–7, 9). A semantic unity for these motifs is provided by the notion of the relationship between Yahweh and the created order. This relationship is introduced in a static form, as one of ownership based on creation. However, in the next two sections of the psalm it is explicated with dynamic imagery, as the movement of two parties towards each other, characterized in the case of the created order as the ascent of the people and the gates, and in the case of Yahweh, as an anticipated entry. Thematically, the psalm presents the relationship of possession between Yahweh and creation, portrayed as approach and anticipated encounter.

In its portrayal of Yahweh, the psalm highlights God's ownership of the world and presence in it. Ownership is described in general terms (v. 1) and also noted for some specific items (mountain and holy place, v. 3). Divine presence is indicated by the accessibility of these particular places to humans (v. 3) and, more forcefully, by the pending entry of Yahweh through the gates (vv. 7, 9). The title

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preisen heisst vor ihm leben: Exegetische Studien zum Verständnis von acht ausgewahlten Psalmen Israels (BTS 12; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1988), 75–76. Gunkel hinted at an eschatological interpretation of the psalm and one has been developed by Smart, but, on the whole, this line has been ignored by scholars; see Gunkel, *Introduction*, 74–5 and Smart, "Psalm 24".

[52] The concept of the Lordship of Yahweh has been suggested as a theme for this psalm, for example, by Craigie, *Psalms 1–50*, 211–12; Gerstenberger, *Psalms 1*, 118–19. However, the practical value of this portmanteau concept is questionable.

"king" which climaxes the psalm catches both ownership and presence. Warrior attributes are associated with Yahweh (vv. 8, 10), but no justification for these is given.

Divine activity is described in the past and the future. It is remembered that God founded the world at some point past. In the future, it is expected that God will arrive at the gates (vv. 7–10) and will give blessings to certain people (v. 5). However nothing is asserted about God's activity in the present, beyond implied movement towards the gates.

The psalm defines a class of people (those who will ascend or those who seek). Membership in this class is linked to moral behavior, although the prescriptions are rather vague (honesty in speech and integrity in worship). This group is encouraged by the promise of reward (v. 6). The grammar emphasizes the activities of people in this group (they ascend, seek, carry, etc). The mere existence of this class implies that there is another category of those people who are marked by their practice of false worship and deceit.

The created order is also an agent in the psalm. It is asserted at the start of the psalm to be the property of Yahweh, a non-empty claim in the pluralistic Hellenistic culture. After this, creation is epitomized by Zion and the Temple, which is the location where an encounter with Yahweh can take place. Finally, the gates (of the Temple) appear as actors who are called on to facilitate the coming of Yahweh. The language of the call to the gates, which uses the same verb as that predicated of humans, suggests that the Temple, and through it creation, is able to join with that class of people who seek Yahweh and will receive a reward. The psalm hints at the solidarity of the created order in worship of Yahweh.

The seas and rivers also appear in the psalm as the bedrock for creation, illustrating Yahweh's power. They too may have joined in praise of Yahweh.[53]

For most of the psalm, the speaking voice is an authoritative and dogmatic figure outside the psalm, pronouncing Yahweh's ownership in vv. 1–2, commanding the gates in vv. 7, 9, and providing incontrovertible information in vv. 4–6, 8bc, 10bc. A foil for this omniscient, imperious persona is provided in the brief questions in vv. 3, 8a, 10a. Identification of the voice in both roles is uncertain. Since

[53] See n. 16.

the psalm contains words of praise to Yahweh (especially in vv. 7–10), one would infer that the speaker is aligned with Yahweh and so belongs to the seekers of God. The absence of the voice from the content of the psalm gives the impression that the psalm is an accurate depiction of a real circumstance.[54]

2. *Psalm 48*

1. A song; a psalm of the Korahites.

2. Great is Yahweh
   and very worthy of praise
   in the city of our God,
   his holy mountain,
3. of beautiful extent,
   the joy of all the earth,
   Zion mountain,
   pinnacle of Zaphon,
   the city of the great king,
4. God, in its citadels,
   has revealed himself as a refuge.

5. For, behold, the kings gathered,
   they marched on together,
6. They saw, then they were stunned;
   they became terrified; [then] they bolted.
7. Trembling seized them there,
   distress like a woman giving birth.
8. as when the east wind wrecks ships on the sea.

9. As we have heard, so we have seen
   in the city of Yahweh Sabaoth, in the city of our God,
   God establishes her forever. *Selah.*

10. We have reflected, O God, on your gracious kindness,
    in the midst of your temple.
11. As your fame is, O God, so is your praise

[54] This fosters the tendency to locate the psalm in a liturgical setting with a real procession and real gates.

over the ends of the earth.
Your right hand is filled with justice.
12. Let the mountain of Zion rejoice,
Let the daughters of Judah shout for joy,
because of your decisions.
13. Walk around Zion and make a circuit around her.
count her towers,
14. Note well her outer wall,
and examine her citadels,
so that you may tell the next generation,
15. that this is God,
our God forever and ever.
He will lead us
eternally.

v. 1: The LXX includes δευτέρᾳ σαββάτου. The Psalms of Korah are Ps 42, 44–49, 84, 85, 87, 88. All except Ps 48, 87 include למנצח in the superscription.

v. 2: The sentence v. 2ab also appears in Ps 96:4; 145:3 and 1 Chr 16:25. The translation "Great is Yahweh and much praised" is also possible; see Michael L. Barré, "The Seven Epithets of Zion in Ps 48, 2–3," *Bib* 69 (1988): 558 n. 7. The gloss "in Jerusalem" is added to v. 2b in the targum; see Díez Merino, *Targum de Salmos*, 112.

v. 3: The translation of v. 3a is uncertain. The word נוף is a hapax legomenon. It is often interpreted as standing in parallel to ירכה, with the sense of an extreme point (NRSV: "beautiful in elevation," cf. Tanakh, RSV and other modern translations), cf. the parallel passage Lam 2:15, which supports taking נוף as semantically close to כליל (also Ps 50:2). Other renderings are possible. In later Hebrew, נוף could mean a summit, the boughs of a tree (including associations with the extent of the tree), or the city Memphis in Egypt; see Jastrow, 889. The first of these meanings agrees with the translation chosen. The third has been supported by Barre, who argues that נוף and צפון are parallel references to "renowned foreign holy places" and renders v. 3a as "beautiful Memphis." However, nowhere else in the Hebrew Bible is Memphis associated with Yahweh in a positive way. The second meaning might be interpreted as a reference to foliage ("beautiful of vegetation") although this has no parallel in the psalm. It is more convicing to read it as an allusion to the world wide coverage of Zion ("beautiful of compass"). In this case, v. 3a provides justification for v. 3b (as a tree brings welcome shade to the land under it, so Zion brings joy to the whole world) and also v. 11. The tricola vv. 2d–3b and 3c–3e would then be parallel, but contrasting, descriptions of God's mountain, the first emphasizing its extent, the second pinpointing its location. The LXX renders the line as εὖ ῥιζῶν or εὐρίζων. The first

reading can be translated "firmly founded." The second is more obscure, but has been read by some early interpreters as a synonym to εὐρύων (to make wide), which again points to the extent of Zion. See Barré, "Seven Epithets," 560–63; Dahood, *Psalms 1*, 288–89; F. W. Mozley, *The Psalter of the Church: The Septuagint Psalms Compared with the Hebrew, with Various Notes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1905), 83–84.

Zaphon: There is a remarkable unanimity among modern scholars that צפון in this psalm is a direct reference to a mythological mountain where the gods dwelt, rather than a (geographically absurd) attempt to locate Zion in the "north" in accord with the later meaning of the word (but the NRSV reads "in the far north"). The scholarly consensus is followed here since there are indicators that the notion of a mountain of the gods would still have been current in the late Second Temple period (e.g., *1 En.* 25:5–8 as well as Greek and Roman mythology). See Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1–50* (WBC 19; Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1983), 351, 353; Richard J. Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament* (HSM 4; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972), 142–43; Dahood, *Psalms 1*, 289–90; Manfried Dietrich and Oswald Loretz, "Ugaritisch *srrt spm, srry* und hebräisch *jrktj spwn*," *UF* 22 (1990): 79–86; Julian Morgenstern, "Psalm 48," *HUCA* 16 (1941): 47–87; J. J. M. Roberts, "The Davidic Origin of the Zion Tradition," *JBL* 92 (1973): 334–36; A. Robinson, "Zion and Saphon in Psalm 48:3," *VT* 24 (1974): 119–21.

pinnacle: For the dual form ירכה as the top extremity; see Robinson, "Zion," 121. Dahood prefers a reference to the innermost part (*Psalms 1*, 289–90).

great king: Adele Berlin has argued that רב indicates quantity and suggests that v. 3e should be translated "city of a noble/mighty king" or "city of numerous kings," referring to a human, not divine, leader; see Berlin, "On the Meaning of *rb*," *JBL* 100 (1981): 92–93. However, such a reference is out of place in vv. 2–4, which concern Yahweh and Zion. See n. 62.

v. 4: *God*: Since the psalm occurs in the "Elohistic Psalter," it has been suggested that the tetragrammaton originally stood throughout the psalm; see, e.g., Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 1–59: A Commentary* (trans. Hilton C. Oswald; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988), 472. In vv. 2, 9 it may have been preserved as part of traditional formula.

v. 5: *Kings:* The LXX has "kings of the earth" perhaps under the influence of Ps 2:2.

marched together: Or "as one they became angry."

v. 6: *They:* Dahood conjectured that המה is derived from the Ugaritic "lo," but, as Johannes C. de Moor has shown, this derivation is uncertain and unnecessary; see Dahood, "The Language and Date of Psalm 48(47)," *CBQ* 16 (1954): 16; de Moor, "Ugaritic *hm* – Never 'Behold'," *UF* 1 (1969): 201–2.

v. 7: *there*: The antecedent for שם is not clear, and the word is omitted in some versions.

v. 8: *ships on the sea*: Literally "ships of tarshish." According to Cyrus Gordon, תרשׁישׁ was also a color term, describing a deep wine color, applied to the open sea because of its dark color, and then to lands over the sea; see Gordon, "The Wine Dark Sea," *JNES* 37 (1978): 51–52. He cites some late sources in the Targums and Jerome that preserve this meaning. Usually תרשׁישׁ is taken to be a geographical site, which assumes the term has only one meaning. For a summary, see André Lemaire, "Tarshish-*Tarsisi*: Probleme de Topographie Historique Biblique et Assyrienne," in *Studies in Historical Geography and Biblical Historiography: Presented to Zecharia Kallai* (ed. Gershon Galil and Moshe Weinfeld; VTSup 81; Leiden: Brill, 2000), 44–62. A "ship of tarshish" would then be one capable of a certain voyage. However, in Ps 48, it is the weakness of the ship that is stressed. It is as natural for a ship of Tarshish to be wrecked as a woman in labor to shake.

v. 9: *in the city of our God*: Mowinckel would replace this on metrical ground, e.g., by "it will not be moved" (Ps 46:6), see Sigmund Mowinckel, *Real and Apparent Tricola in Hebrew Psalm Poetry* (ANVAO, II, Hist.-Filos Klasse 1957/2; Oslo: H. Aschehoug, 1957), 78. This alternative is consistent with the rest of the psalm, yet there is no way of ascertaining if the replacement occurred before or after the psalm came into daily use.

v. 11: That is, God's renown and praise is universal. The preposition על is frequently emended to עד, "to"; see Craigie, *Psalms 1–50*, 352; P. Leo Krinetzki, "Zur Poetik und Exegese von Ps 48," *BZ* 4 (1960): 92–93.

v. 14: *outer wall*: Reading לְחֵילָהּ.

examine: Following Dahood in relating the hapax legomenon פסגו to the verb סיג, "to meditate, examine" (*Psalms 1*, 293).

v. 15: Although the sense of the last verse as a strong statement of a permanent relationship among God, Zion and the people is clear, precise translation is difficult. There are two problems. First, the opening words can be read in several ways: "This is God, our God . . .," "This God is our God forever . . .," or "This [namely, the mountain of Zion] is God's . . ."; see J. Coppens, "La Royauté de Yahvé dans le Psautier," *ETL* 53 (1977): 336 n. g. The matter is further complicated by the possibility that the divine name once stood in the verse, so, perhaps "This is Yahweh, . . .," and so on. Second, in the MT, the verse closes with the phrase על־מות, whose meaning is completely opaque. Commentators usually either re-point it as עַלְמוֹת, "forever," as here, or place it outside the psalm as a superscription for the next psalm, e.g., those who repoint include Coppens, "Royaute," 336 n. h; Dahood, *Psalms 1*, 294; Krinetzki, "Poetik und Exegese," 73; those who would move it to the next psalm include Barré, "Seven Epithets," 557 n. 2; Sidney Jellicoe, "A Note on 'al-mut (Psalm XLVIII.15)," *JTS* 49 (1948): 52–53; Kraus, *Psalms 1–59*, 476. A list of options may be found in Craigie, *Psalms 1–50*, 352. Martin Huage argues to retain it as an instance of a motif of Zion being led by Yahweh away from a deadly threat; see Hauge, "Some Aspects of the Motif of 'the City Facing Death' of Ps 68:21," *SJOT* 1 (1988): 1–29. In the targums it

is interpreted as a reference to youth; see Horst D. Preuss, "Die Psalmenüberschriften in Targum und Midrasch," ZAW 71 (1959): 49. What was sung at the end of the psalm in the Tamid service is unknown.

Psalm 48 is usually classified as one of the Songs of Zion. This group, which includes Psalms 46, 48, 76, 84, 87 and 122, forms a sub-category of psalms of praise. Although strictly speaking the psalms in the group exhibit different forms (so Ps 46 might be called a psalm of confidence, Ps 48 a communal hymn, and so on), the dominant interest of each psalm in the holy city Zion leads to their association on thematic grounds.[55]

In the translation, the psalm has been divided into five sections on the basis of content and intent. The first section, which follows the superscription is given over to praise of Yahweh and Zion (vv. 2–4). This is followed by an account of the miraculous rout of hostile kings (vv. 5–8). The central verse of the psalm, v. 9, sums up the cultural process envisaged in the psalm. The fourth section returns to communal praise of Yahweh (vv. 10–12). The psalm closes with exhortation to inspect Zion and hand on traditional beliefs (vv. 13–15).[56]

This division of the psalm into strophes is convenient, but not unquestioned. Some would separate out v. 2ab as an introduction which functions as a call to worship, or v. 15 as a confession of trust.[57] The language of the psalm binds all the sections together.

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[55] For further discussion of this genre, see Gunkel, *Introduction*, 55–57; also Gerstenberger, *Psalms 1*, 194, 202, 258; Uwe Sperling, *Das theophanische Jahwe-Überlegenheitsleid: Forschungsbericht und gattungskritische Untersuchung der sogenannten Zionlieder* (Europäische Hochschulschriften 23/426; Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang, 1991), esp. 315–17. On the Korahite Psalms, see n. 80 and Martin J. Buss, "The Psalms of Asaph and Korah," *JBL* 82 (1963): 382–92.

[56] Points of contact between the second and fourth, and first and fifth sections suggest a rather loose chiastic structure to the psalm; see nn. 73, 74.

[57] The case for a division into 5 parts is presented in detail by P. Leo Krinetzki, "Sur Poetik und Exegese von Ps 48," *BZ* 4 (1960): 72–73. Many follow this, e.g., Martin Palmer, "The Cardinal Points in Psalm 48," *Bib* 46 (1965): 357; Mark S. Smith, "God and Zion: Form and Meaning of Psalm 48," *SEL* 6 (1989): 67. For the variations, concerning v. 2 see, e.g., Craigie, *Psalms 1–50*, 352; Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms I: 1–50: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (AB 16; New York: Doubleday, 1965), 289 and for v. 15, Pierre Auffret, "Dans la ville de notre Dieu: Étude structurelle du Psaume 48," *ScEs* 42 (1990): 305–6, 308, 318–19; Gerstenberger, *Psalms 1*, 119. Michael Barré excludes v. 4 from the first section; see Barré, *The God-List in the Treaty Between Hannibal and Philip V of Macedonia: A Study in Light of the Ancient Near Eastern Treaty Tradition* (NES; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 557 n. 3. Josef Scharbert includes v. 9 with vv. 5–8; see Scharbert, "Das historische

There is a high degree of repetition of words and similes throughout the psalm (e.g., אלהים, יהוה, ציון, הר, עיר, קריה, and the particle כ) which serves to complicate a detailed structural analysis of the psalm by creating a multitude of interconnections between separate verses.[58]

The first section of the psalm introduces the two subjects, Yahweh and Zion. After a few general words in praise of God (v. 2ab), attention is drawn to the city itself (v. 2c). There follows a sequence of exuberant praises of Zion (vv. 2d–3), before the next verse (v. 4) returns to God, and affirms the divine protection of the city. Although there is a structural separation of these two subjects with vv. 2c and 3e forming an inclusion around the epithets of Zion, the psalm also maintains close links between them. In the first line Zion is introduced as "the city of God" (v. 2c), and the first descriptive statement reiterates this possession ("God's mountain," v. 2d), while the last epithet shifts attention back to God, as "the great king" (v. 3e), who, according to the next verse, is found *in* the city (v. 4). In the first section, and indeed as in the whole psalm, Zion and Yahweh are coupled together in a circle of revelation and praise. Zion is exulted because God is found there, and God is known through the existence and history of the city.[59]

The central part of the first section is a block of six descriptive phrases applied to Zion. Linguistic obscurities in vv. 3a and 3d impede the interpretation of this block as a whole. However the phrases appear to be arranged in two parallel groups of three.[60] The second group can be seen as a particularization of the first.[61]

Umfeld von Psalm 48," in *Ein Gott, eine Offenbarung: Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese, Theologie und Spiritualität; Festschrift für Notker Füglister OSB zum 60. Geburtstag* (ed. Friedrich V. Reiterer; Würzburg: Echter, 1991), 300–301.

[58] Auffret is thoroughgoing in his analysis of such links. He detects multiple internal parallels and chiasms within the sections of the psalm and external correspondences between individual sections and blocks of sections; see Auffret, "Dans la ville," esp. the diagrams on 320 and 321. In his analysis, Auffret consistently assumes that the various literary devices are significant indicators of the structure of the psalm. While this assumption is often helpful, it is questionable whether it can be applied as a uniform methodological principle to the extent found in Auffret's analysis; for instance, parallels may arise as the byproducts of a repetitive style rather than for structural reasons.

[59] Smith has shown that this reciprocity extends through the psalm ("God and Zion"); see also Ollenburger, *Zion*.

[60] For the first member, parallelism is achieved through the use of הר, and for the third, via a geographical reference (earth/city).

[61] Robert Alter, on the other hand, finds linear movement intensifying in praise

The "holy mountain" is identified as "Zion," the beautiful peak as the mythological mountain of the gods, and "the joy of the earth" is specified as the city where the great king dwells.[62] The list is mainly for effect; apart from the presence of God in Zion, its elements are not developed in the rest of the psalm.

The praise of Zion is framed by statements about God (vv. 2ab, 3e). The first of these, although typical (cf. Ps 76:1), implicitly raises a question that the rest of the psalm seeks to answer: "Why is Yahweh to be praised?" A partial answer is found in v. 4. God is to be praised because of the divine protective activity associated with the city.[63] The remainder of the psalm develops this answer.

An instance of God's protective activity is laid out in the second section of the psalm (vv. 5–8), which describes the assault and repulse of certain kings. The description is skillfully written and artistically highly effective. The language is sparse. In vv. 5 and 6 the campaign is sketched using little more than a string of verbs – the kings assemble, advance, are checked and flee.[64] There is much that is not said. Who are these kings? What is the object of their attack? What caused their defeat?[65] Where are they defeated?[66] Despite these gaps, the description captures the reader, who fills in the gaps almost without thinking. The kings are rulers of all the non-Israelite nations (so the LXX reads "kings of the earth") and, one presumes from the

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of Zion and culminating with the assertion that God dwells there; see "The Psalms: Beauty Heightened Through Poetic Structure," *Bible Review* 2, no. 3 (Fall 1986): 37.

[62] The term הר קדשׁ is common for Zion, e.g., Ps 2:6; 3:5; 15:1; 43:3; 87:1; 99:9; Dan 9:16, 20; 11:45. The epithet "great king" appears as a royal title for Ancient Near Eastern kings, e.g., as a title used by Esarhaddon, "The Fight for the Throne," trans. Campbell Thompson and Th. Bauer, *ANET* 289. It is unlikely that the reference in Ps 48 is to a human king. Davidic kingship is absent elsewhere in the psalm, which presents Yahweh as the ruler and protector of Zion; the parallelism between v. 3e and v. 2c speaks for the identification of the king as God; and the next verse commences with a reference to God. The psalmist apparently has taken a common title and given it to Yahweh. See Alter, "Psalms," 37; Michael L. Barré, "The Seven Epithets of Zion in Ps 48, 2–3," *Bib* 69 (1988): 559; A. Robinson, "Zion and Saphon in Psalm 48:3," *VT* 24 (1974): 123, and the comment on v. 3.

[63] משגב literally refers to a high point and so metaphorically a place of refuge; it can function as a divine name, but does not here; see Staffan Olofsson, *God is my Rock: A Study of Translation Technique and Theological Exegesis in the Septuagint* (ConBOT 31; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1990), 78–80.

[64] It may be that advantage is taken of the double meaning of עבר, so that one verb covers both the enraged behavior of the kings and their attack.

[65] In v. 6, ראו lacks an object.

[66] That is, to what does שם point in v. 7?

context, they march on Zion. Somewhere close to that city, their attack is turned, perhaps by the sight of the divine glory of Yahweh, perhaps by the sight of Zion itself, or, remembering the close association of Zion and Yahweh in the psalm, perhaps by both together, when they see the divine glory that infuses the city.[67]

In contrast to the brevity in vv. 5–6, the description lingers in vv. 7 and 8 over the breakdown of the hostile forces. At first the kings merely tremble, then spasms shake their bodies which finally tear apart, like ships in a wild storm. The abrupt slowing of the description indicates that the emphasis falls not on the attack, but on the protective power of Yahweh. The enemy shatters on the strong bulwark.

The effectiveness of the description in this section is further illustrated by the attempts of commentators to assign it to some particular historical situation, under the assumption that such vivid language must reflect a real experience. The attack has been variously posited as a revolt of vassals during the reign of Solomon, the siege of Sennacherib, or the destruction of Xerxes fleet in 480 B.C.E.[68] These attempts require the superimposition of an extra level of explanation in addition to that required to fill the gaps in vv. 5–6. Ultimately none of them are convincing. The section is better understood as an imaginative construct unrelated to any particular historical event.[69] Behind it lies traditional mythological speculations associated with Zion.[70]

The tale of victory is broken by the central verse, v. 9. This verse is linked to the other sections, both in language and thought, yet also stands outside of them. Links in language are formed by the repetition of עיר (vv. 9cd and 2), יהוה (vv 9c and 1);[71] ראה (vv. 9b and 6), עולם (vv. 9e and 15), the particle כ (vv. 9a, and 5, 11, 15), and אלהים. This verse captures the thought of the other sections of

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[67] Verses 6 and 7 are inconsistent. One cannot simultaneously run away and convulse as in labor.

[68] See, e.g., Morgenstern, "Psalm 48," 5–18; J. J. M. Roberts, "The Davidic Origin of the Zion Tradition," *JBL* 92 (1973): 339; Scharbert, "Psalm 48," 302–5, respectively.

[69] William F. Albright, review of *HUCA* 16, 17, 18, *JBL* 64 (1945): 286.

[70] On the tradition of the inviolabililty of Zion, see John H. Hayes, "The Tradition of Zion's Inviolability," *JBL* 82 (1963): 419–26; Roberts, "Davidic Origin," and the references in n. 20.

[71] In the LXX and Syriac, the divine name also occurs in v. 12.

the psalm in each of its short phrases. The first phrase of the verse, v. 9a, with its reference to hearing suggests the reception of the praise in the first section and the third (vv. 2, 11, cf. v. 14). Hearing is followed by seeing, a process which is implicit in the statement of v. 10 and in the invitation of the fifth section (vv. 13, 14). The reference to seeing also establishes a contrast between two groups. The faithful see Yahweh in Zion and rejoice; the hostile kings saw, and panicked (vv. 6–7). The appellation, Yahweh Sabaoth, recalls the military might of God and through this the defeat of the kings in the second section. The reference to עיר אלהים echoes the first section (v. 2) which also asserted the presence of Yahweh in the city. Finally, and climactically, the divine and everlasting establishment of Zion in v. 9e summarizes the thought underlying each of the other sections of the psalm.

The verse also introduces a reflexive element into the psalm and through this produces a cycle of praise. If one asks what is heard, then the answer given in the psalm itself is that the words of v. 15 are the words that are heard. If one asks what is seen, the answer is Zion. Now the words that are heard are spoken to the next generation, and the things seen are seen by the speakers to that generation. So the speakers of the psalm are both the recipients of words from the previous generation and the traditors of those words to the ones who follow. The result is a cyclic effect. The psalm in itself generates a never-ending sequence of praise of Yahweh in Zion, passed on from one generation to the next.

The fourth section of the psalm presents the worshippers addressing God, as they reflect on their experience in the city. Verse 10c locates something in the Temple. This cannot be the worshippers, as the Temple was not a place of meditation; indeed, it was off-limits to lay Israelites who form the implied speakers and hearers of the psalm. The verse allows another possibility, namely that God's gracious kindness (חסד) is seen in the Temple. Just as the city with its fortifications concretizes God's protection, so too does the Temple represent in architectural form the essential ingredient of the relationship between God and people, the constant assurance of God's beneficial care (חסד) for the people.[72]

[72] Hans-Jurgen Zobel, "חֶסֶד hesed," *TDOT* 5:44–64.

There is also a poetic contrast between the precise particularity of place in v. 10, the Temple itself (not as in previous verses the larger city of God), and the expansive inclusiveness of the following verse, where God's name is spread over all the earth (קצוי־ארץ). It is as if meditation upon the nuclear point of God's presence, חסד in the Temple, mushrooms into a realization of God's universal extent in v. 11. The term שם is rich with connotations. It recalls the deuteronomistic theology of the Temple as the place where God's "name" dwells, and so links semantically with the concentration on the Temple in the previous verse. Yet the unfolding of v. 11 overturns this precision by expanding the location of God's "name" to the whole earth. The term שם can also carry the meaning of reputation. Why might God's fame be known over all the earth? In the world created by the psalm text, the event that gives universal notice to God is the rout of the kings in vv. 5–8. God is known over all the earth for the defense of Jerusalem (cf. Ps 65:6; Is 26:15).[73] Consequently, צדק in v. 11c may also carry the meaning of "victory" as well as "justice."

In v. 12, the worshippers address Zion and the other cities and towns in Judah (her "daughters") and call on them to rejoice because of God's decisions (משפטים). The parallel between vv. 5–8 and 10–11 shows that the term "decision" here connotes the reversal of an incorrect situation. The cry to rejoice echoes, and may explain, the earlier assertion in v. 3b that Zion is the joy of the earth.

The speaker again changes in the fifth and final section of the psalm (vv. 13–15) in which the worshippers receive instructions. First they are called on to make a tour of Jerusalem, and observe her fortifications (vv. 13–14). The reoccurrence of "citadels" (ארמנה) at the end of v. 14 suggests the reason for the tour. This word ties the procession to the first section of the psalm (v. 4).[74] There, the citadels were given as the example of the location of God in Zion. Here in vv. 13–14, the instances of fortified places are increased (towers, wall,

[73] Other ties between vv. 5–8 and vv. 10–11 are the motif of concentration (by the kings on Jerusalem, by the faithful on the Temple) followed by expansion (the dispersion of the kings in flight, the spread of the name throughout the earth), a motif of perception (kings see, worshippers ponder), and Tarshish, as one of the ends of the earth, to which God's fame will be declared (v. 8, 11b; cf. Is 65:19).

[74] Connections between the first and last sections are formed by the references to defenses and the instruction to speak out about God who is present in Zion.

citadels), but the implication is the same. By observing the fortifications of the city, the tourist will see the tangible presence of God as refuge and protector of the city and the nation. Indeed, if God can be seen in the citadels, how much more will the presence of the divine be felt if all the fortifications are observed. The tour makes concrete the theological proposition that God is present in Zion. The permanence of God undergirds the permanence of Zion and, conversely, the (apparent) permanence of Zion's fortifications points to the permanence of Yahweh.

The worshippers are called on, in the second place, to pass on this experience of God to the next generation. As noted above, the psalm engenders a cycle of tradition. Having seen the city and felt the presence of God, the worshipper will go and tell others, who then will come and experience it for themselves (v. 9). The multiple meanings carried by the ambiguous grammar of v. 15 (כי זה אלהים אלהינו עולם ועד) span the beliefs expressed in the psalm and may well arise from the deliberate craft of the author. This, the city, is God; this God, present in the city, is the god of the people; and both the city and God will endure forever.

The motifs in this psalm are drawn largely from the complex of Zion traditions, and express the extraordinary status of Zion-Jerusalem. The major motifs are: Zion as God's special possession (vv. 2–3) and the place in the mundane world where God may be encountered, in particular in the city's fortifications and the Temple (vv. 4, 10, 13–15); the attack of the foreign kings, here used as an illustration of an encounter with God (vv. 5–8); and Yahweh as the guarantor of the security of Zion and of prosperity for its inhabitants (v. 4, 9c).[75] The motif of God as a universal, just ruler appears in the psalm (vv. 3e, 11, 12). In addition there is a stylistic motif of seeing, hearing and telling which is linked with the encounter with Yahweh and which appears in different guises. The kings see and are destroyed; the faithful hear and see, then praise Yahweh and tell the next generation of their experience. The psalm itself is an act of proclaiming what has been experienced. This motif extends to agents in the inanimate world, which experience Yahweh in some form and rejoice (vv. 3b, 11, 12).

[75] Verses 2–3 allude to several other Zion traditions, but these are not developed in the psalm.

These motifs revolve around the intimate connection between Yahweh and Zion, expressed primarily in terms of the security of the city and the personal experience of speakers. Zion is the embodiment of Yahweh's presence in the world as ruler and protector of the people. This is the theme of the psalm.[76]

The psalm is unusual in the Tamid Psalms in its repeated use of first person plural forms. This device identifies the voice of the psalm as the observers who survey Zion and praise Yahweh.[77]

The psalm attributes remarkably few actions to the agent Yahweh.[78] Indeed, the psalm alludes to the universal just rule of Yahweh (vv. 3e, 11, 12), but does not make much of this status. Yahweh's major role in the psalm is that of the protector of Zion. This defensive role is presented not so much as something Yahweh *does* but as something that happens because of the divine presence in the city. It is portrayed in terms of the architecture of the city's fortifications, an extremely stable, inactive image. In a similar vein, the defeat of the kings does not come about by any direct action in defense of the city, but rather their attack collapses of itself when they observe (something, probably the Yahweh-city amalgam).[79] Mere presence of the divine guarantees safety, without the need to lift a celestial finger.

Two groups of people appear in the psalm, differentiated by their reactions to a vision or encounter with the divine. On the negative side there are the hostile kings, who, when they see, dissolve in fear. On the positive side, there are the faithful who sing the psalm and are in turn addressed by it (in the guise of the next generation).

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[76] From his study of the symbol Zion in the Hebrew Bible, Ollenburger has deduced that in this larger body of literature, Zion has among its primary meanings (denotations) the kingship of Yahweh and among its secondary meanings (connotations) the exclusive prerogative of Yahweh to provide for the security of the people (*Zion*, esp. 19). The theme of Ps 48 is consistent with this more general characterization.

[77] The first person is not used in vv. 5–8. This allows the possibility of a different identity for the voice in this passage. In terms of the flow of the psalm, these verses could be regarded as the message told to the observers, which they then appropriate for themselves (v. 9) and pass on to the next generation of observers (vv. 13–15). So the voice in vv. 4–8 may be the authoritative voice of the previous generation of observers.

[78] God's action are to reveal himself as a refuge (v. 4), found Zion (v. 9c) and lead the people (v. 15). The psalm also alludes to the universal rule of Yahweh (vv. 3e, 11, 12) but does not develop this idea.

[79] The sense that protection happens as a matter of course not through divine intervention is reinforced by the omission of identification of what is seen.

These people see God in the structures of the city and praise God. They hear about God, and pass on their experience to their descendents. The psalm draws a contrast between the kings who march against the city and fear when they see, and God's people, who march about it, see, and then praise and proclaim.

The other important agent in the psalm is Zion itself. The association of the city with the divine has already been noted. However, although almost divinized, in this psalm Zion remains identified with the earthly city, Jerusalem, through references to its observable, tangible fortifications. Like Yahweh, Zion does very little in this psalm; it is and is observed However, it is called on to rejoice, along with other cities (v. 12). Indeed, joy is something that the world itself can exhibit (v. 3b).

The psalm aims to encourage confidence in the continuing protection of Zion by Yahweh. In this role, it is the most puzzling of the daily psalms. The security of Zion was not borne out by the history of the Second Temple period, nor indeed by Israel's history in any period. One only needs to think of the domination of the Seleucids or the conquest by Pompey to realize the discrepancy between the confidence of the psalm and the political realities of Judah. It is hard to imagine that the psalm could have been interpreted with anything other than a future orientation. At the same time, towards the close of the period, the words of the psalm would have reverberated mightily with the splendor of Herod's temple, and contributed to the fanaticism that guaranteed destruction, not of foreign forces, but of the city itself.

3. *Psalm 82*

1. A Psalm; of Asaph.
   God stands up in the divine assembly;
   In the midst of the divine beings he rules.
2. "How long will you rule on the side of evil
   and gladden the face of the wicked?
   Selah
3. "Rule for the poor and the orphan;
   find in favor of the impoverished and the destitute;
4. come to the aid of the poor and the needy;
   from the hand of the wicked rescue them."

5. "They do not know,
   nor do they understand.
   In darkness they wander.
   All the foundations of the earth are shaken."
6. "I myself pronounced you divine beings,
   and heavenly creatures, all of you.
7. Yet like Adam you will die,
   and like one of the Princes you will fall."
8. Arise, O God; rule the earth;
   for you own all the peoples!

v. 1: *divine assembly*: Hebrew בעדת־אל. The LXX and some other versions read "in the assembly of divine beings" (ἐν συναγωγῇ θεῶν, which would represent a translation of בעדת אלים or בעדת־אלהים). James S. Ackerman has argued that two separate Hebrew versions of the verse existed with אלים standing in the older, cf. Ps 58:2; 89:6–8, "An Exegetical Study of Psalm 82" (Th.D. diss., Harvard University, 1966), 273–90.

divine beings: The semantic range of the term אלהים (θεοί in LXX), found here and in v. 6., is very broad, including deities, angels and worthy humans. The issue of the identification of this group in Ps 82 is discussed below.

v. 4: *poor*: Accepting the MT דל in both vv. 3, 4, see Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms II: 51–100: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (AB 17; New York: Doubleday, 1968), 209.

v. 6: *pronounced*: Rejecting the suggestion that אמרתי here means "I had thought"; see Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51–100* (WBC 20; Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 330.

heavenly creatures: Literally "sons of Elyon." The term בן can indicate membership in a class, not biological descent; see G. B. Caird, *Principalities and Powers: A Study in Pauline Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), 2; H. Haag, Jan Bergmann and Helmer Ringgren, "בֵּן ben," *TDOT* 2:145–59, esp. 152–53, 158.

v. 7: *like Adam*: Or "like a man." The pun may be deliberate. For the restrictive adverb אכן, see Fredric. J. Goldbaum, "Two Hebrew Quasi-Adverbs," *JNES* 23 (1964): 135; *IBHS*, 670–71.

Princes: Or "Shining Ones," a class of divine beings, see John Gray, *The Legacy of Canaan: The Ras Shamra Texts and their Relevance to the Old Testament* (2d rev. ed.; VTSup 5; Leiden: Brill, 1965), 272–73; E. Theodore Mullen, Jr., *The Divine Council in Canaanite and Early Hebrew Literature* (Alternative title: *The Assembly of the Gods*; HSM 24; Chico, Ca: Scholars Press, 1980), 238–40.

v. 8: The translation of v. 8b is debated. Possible meanings for נחל include: "possess, own, control, or assign." The tense may be present, past or future. The clause may be explanatory or imperative. The closest

parallel is Deut 32:8. For further discussion, see Ackermann, "Psalm 82," 429–40; A. Gonzalez, "Le Psaume 82," *VT* 13 (1963): 308; Dahood, *Psalms II*, 271; Mullen, *Divine Council*, 230; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 340; and other commentaries.

Psalm 82 is the first of two psalms of Asaph that were included among the Tamid Psalms.[80] It is a short psalm but its content, unique and enigmatic, has fostered a disproportionate amount of attention from scholars.[81] Much of this scholarship has minor relevance to the present study, as the focus of attention almost always has been on

[80] On the psalms of Asaph, see Buss, "Asaph and Korah"; Karl-Johann Illman, *Thema und Tradition in den Asaf-Psalmen* (Meddelanden från Stiftelsens for Abo akademi forskningsinstitut; Abo: Abo Akademi, 1976); Harry P. Nasuti, *Tradition History and the Psalms of Asaph* (SBLDS 88; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988); Gary A. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms* (SBLMS 43; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990). On guilds of musicians in general, see Nahum M. Sarna, "The Psalm Superscriptions and the Guilds," in *Studies in Biblical Interpretation* (JPSSD; Philadelphia: JPS, 2000), 335–56; repr. from *Studies in Jewish Religious and Intellectual History: Presented to Alexander Altmann on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday* (ed. Siegfried Stein and Raphael Loewe; University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1979), 281–300.

[81] The literature is far too great for detailed review here. Two extended studies are James S. Ackerman, "An Exegetical Study of Psalm 82" (Th.D. diss., Harvard University, 1966); and Hans-Winfried Jüngling, *Der Tod der Götter: Eine Untersuchung zu Psalm 82* (SBS 38; Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1969). Ackerman's dissertation is an extremely detailed study of Ps 82, heavily influenced by the theories of F. M. Cross, worth consulting on every point but unfortunately not widely available. Other works include James S. Ackerman, "The Rabbinic Interpretation of Psalm 82 and the Gospel of John," *HTR* 59 (1966): 186–91; Luis Alonso Schökel, *Treinta Salmos: Poesia y Oracion* (EAT 2; Ediciones Cristiandad, Madrid: 1981), 287–304; Francis I. Andersen, "Short Note on Psalm 82,5," *Bib* 50 (1969): 393–94; Pierre Auffret, "Dieu Juge: Etude Structurelle du Psaume 82," *BN* 58 (1991): 7–12; Willa Boesak, "Exegesis and Proclamation: Psalm 82: God Amidst the Gods," *JTSA* 64 (1988): 64–68; Gerald Cooke, "The Sons of (the) God(s)," *ZAW* 76 (1964): 22–47; Joseph Coppens, "Miscellanées Bibliques XI: Trois Paralleles Ougaritens du Psautier," *ETL* (1947): 173–77; Kenneth M. Craig, Jr., "Psalm 82," *Int* 49 (1995): 281–84; C. R. Dickson, "Empowerment: A Theological Perspective," *SK* 15 (1994): 248–63; idem, "The Hebrew Terminology for the Poor in Psalm 82," *HvTSt* 51 (1995): 1029–45; Manfried Dietrich and Oswald Loretz, *"Jahwe und seine Aschera": Anthropomorphes Kultbild in Mesopotamien, Ugarit und Israel; Das biblische Bilderverbot* (UBL 9; Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 1992), 134–53; John A. Emerton, "The Interpretation of Psalm lxxxii in John X," *JTS* ns 11 (1960): 329–32; idem, "Melchizedek and the Gods: Fresh Evidence for the Jewish Background of John X:34–36," *JTS* ns 17 (1966): 399–401; Heinz-Josef Fabry, " 'Ihr alle seid Söhne des Allerhöchstein' (Ps 82,6). Kanaanäische Richter vor dem Gericht Gottes," *BibLeb* 15 (1974): 135–47; A. Gonzalez, "Le Psaume 82" *VT* 13 (1963): 293–309; Cyrus H. Gordon, "History of Religion in Psalm 82," in *Biblical and Near Eastern Studies: Essays in Honor of William Sanford LaSor* (ed. Gary A. Tuttle; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1978), 129–31; Hermann

matters of origin – the composition of the psalm, its date, provenance, the influence of ANE mythology, its bearing on the religious history of Israel, its redaction history, and so on. However, the central question – that of the identification of the characters in the psalm – remains of importance.

At a textual level, the psalm presents no problems. The text is well preserved with few corruptions or variant readings. The vocabulary is unremarkable. All the words can be found in other texts; in fact, most of them are common. Despite this, the psalm is carefully constructed, with skillful use made of poetic devices such as alliteration, assonance, rhyming and repetition.[82]

The divisions of the psalm can be readily delineated. The setting is sketched in the opening verse (v. 1). This is followed by a speech

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Gunkel, *Ausgewahlte Psalmen* (4th rev. ed.; 1904; repr., Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1917), 111–15; Lowell K. Handy, "Sounds, Words and Meanings in Psalm 82," *JSOT* 47 (1990): 51–66; idem, "One Problem Involved in Translating to Meaning: An Example of Acknowledging Time and Tradition," *SJOT* 10 (1996): 16–27; Anthony T. Hanson, "John's Citation of Psalm LXXXII," *NTS* 11 (1965): 158–62; idem, "John's Citation of Psalm LXXXII Reconsidered," *NTS* 13 (1967): 363–67; Peter Höffken, "Werden und Vergehen der Götter: Ein Beitrag zur Auslegung von Psalm 82," *TZ* 39 (1983): 129–37; Tércio Machado Siqueira, "O Salmo 82," in *Caminho da Libertação* (ed. Gilberto Gorgulho and Ana Flora Anderson; EstBib 2; Petrópolis: Vozes, 1984), 11–17; Patrick D. Miller, "The Sovereignty of God," in *The Hermeneutical Quest: Essays in Honor of James Luther Mays on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (ed. Donald G. Miller; PTM 4; Allison Park, Pa.: Pickwick, 1986), 129–44; idem, "When the Gods Meet: Psalm 82 and the Issue of Justice," *JP* 9, no. 4 (1986): 2–5; Julian Morgenstern, "The Mythological Background of Psalm 82," *HUCA* 14 (1939): 29–126; Jerome H. Neyrey, " 'I Said: You Are Gods': Psalm 82:6 and John 10," *JBL* 108 (1989): 647–63; Herberg Niehr, "Götter oder Menschen – eine falsche Alternative. Bemerkungen zu ps 82," *ZAW* 99 (1987): 94–98; Roger T. O'Callaghan, "A Note on the Canaanite Background of Psalm 82," *CBQ* 15 (1953): 311–14; Simon B. Parker, "The Beginning of the Reign of God – Psalm 82 As Myth and Liturgy," *RB* 102 (1995): 532–59; Willem A. Prinsloo, "Psalm 82: Once Again, Gods or Men?," *Bib* 76 (1995): 219–28; Zoltan Rokay, "Vom Stadttor zu den Vorhöfen: Ps 82 – Sach 1–8 (ein Vergleich)," *ZKT* 116 (1994): 457–63; R. B. Salters, "Psalm 82,1 and the Septuagint," *ZAW* 103 (1991): 225–39; Werner Schlisske, *Gottessöhne und Gottessohn im Alten Testament: Phasen der Entmythisierung im Altern Testament* (BWANT 5/97; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1973), 32–46; Elmer B. Smick, "Mythopoetic Language in the Psalms," *WTJ* 44 (1982): 88–98; Franz J Stendebach, "Glaube und Ethos: Uberlegungen zu Ps 82," in *Freude an der Weisung des Herrn: Beitrage zur Theologie der Psalmen. Festgabe zum 70. Geburtstag Heinrich Gross* (ed. Ernst Haag and Frank-Lothar Hossfeld; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1986), 425–40; Matitiahu Tsevat, "God and the Gods in Assembly: An Interpretation of Psalm 82," *HUCA* 40–41 (1970): 123–37; P. J. van Zijl, "Die Interpretasie van Psalm 82 in die lig van Nuwe Narvorsing," *NGTT* 11 (1970): 65–77.

[82] Handy, "Sounds."

of accusation and admonition aimed at an unspecified audience (vv. 2–4). Next come four explanatory statements (v. 5). A pronouncement of judgement follows (vv. 6–7), and then the psalm closes with a cry apparently from another voice (v. 8).[83]

The different parts of the psalm are linked by various stylistic devices. The first and last verses form an inclusion using אלהים and שׁפט and the synonyms קום and נצב. A link between vv. 5 and 8 is formed through the repetition of ארץ. The keyword שׁפט runs like a thread through the psalm (vv. 1, 2, 3, 8). Repeated "u" sounds link vv. 2–4 with v. 5. The unity of the psalm is established on a verbal level through these philological, structural, semantic and aural devices.[84]

The identity of the speaking voice varies. The first part is spoken by an authoritative voice (v. 1) and the second by God (vv. 2–4).[85] The voice in v. 5 might be either God or human; the matter is contested.[86] The difference has negligible import for the interpretation of the psalm. If it is God, then the observations on the state of the world are unimpeachable, and if a human, then the statements are made from a position of omniscience. The same certitude applies regardless of who speaks v. 7. However, the uncertainty in voice has greater impact on the interpretation of v. 6. That verse can be read as a confession of inadequate understanding, which would represent "crass anthropomorphism" on the lips of God.[87] Alternative interpretations for this verse will be discussed below. In the translation

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[83] The structure of the psalm can be refined beyond the outline given here. See, e.g., Dickson, "Terminology," 1036–37; Erhard S. Gerstenberger, *Psalms Part 2 and Lamentations* (FOTL 15; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2001), 113; Prinsloo, "Psalm 82"; Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to its Techniques* (JSOTSup 26; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 290–93. The structural analysis of Auffret ("Dieu Juge") is too complex to be convincing.

[84] The early redaction history of the psalm is not of importance for the current study; thus it matters little if v. 5 is a later addition, or if, as Morgenstern argued, vv. 2–5ab, and 8 did not form part of the original psalm ("Psalm 82," 31–39, 72, 118); for typical critiques of Morgenstern, see Gonzalez, "Psaume 82," 294–96; E. Theodore Mullen, Jr., *The Divine Council in Canaanite and Early Hebrew Literature* (Alternative title: *The Assembly of the Gods*; HSM 24; Chico, Ca: Scholars Press, 1980), 236.

[85] Or a representative of God, such as Christ (so Augustine and Luther) or a high angel (so 11QMelch); see Handy, "Problem," 24–26.

[86] For example, Tsevat holds that the speaker is God ("God and the Gods," 129); Mullen, a human ("Divine Council," 229).

[87] Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 157.

given above, all of vv. 2–7 are taken as divine speech, divided into three utterances, vv. 2–4, v. 5 and vv. 6–7. The last verse is a human cry whose speaker is an individual or the congregation.[88]

The psalm as a whole has a form which is unique in the Psalter. Parallels can, however, be found for its parts in the Hebrew Bible. Verses 1–7 bear similarity to descriptions of prophetic visions of proceedings in the heavenly court of Yahweh (cf. 1 Kgs 22: 17–23; Is 6:1–13; Zech 3:1–10).[89] These verses lack any characteristics which might be distinctive of a psalm, and if it were not for v. 8 would be classified with these other passages as a fragment of a vision. It is the last verse that converts the vision into a psalm. Verse 8 is a cry of a form found in other places in the Psalter (cf. Ps 7:7; 9:20; 10:12; 17:13; 76:10). Categorization of the genre of the psalm stumbles over its uniqueness. One might call it a prophetic lament, in an attempt to catch both the prophetic aspect and the ostensible plea in the last verse. However, the matter of classification is debated.[90]

Much has been written on the interpretation of Psalm 82.[91] In content, the psalm concerns the condemnation of certain *elohim* (אלהים) on the grounds of their misuse of authority or the power 'to judge, rule' (שׁפט). The crucial issue for interpretation is the identification of these *elohim*. The options for identification will be reviewed before the psalm is discussed in detail.

The term *elohim* occurs four times in the psalm, in vv. 1 (twice), 6 and 8. In vv. 1a and 8, the singular verbal forms indicate that the noun is to be construed as singular and so is used in these places in its common idiomatic role as a term for God.[92] In v. 6 it cannot refer to God, on grammatical and theological grounds.[93] In its

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[88] The possibility that it is an angelic voice is slim. In the heavenly realm, God has already risen in judgment.

[89] For references to discussions on these visions, see n. 103.

[90] See Arnold A. Anderson, *The Book of Psalms* (2 Vols.; NCB; London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1972; repr. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1981), 2:591–92; David M. Fleming, "The Divine Council as Type Scene in the Hebrew Bible" (Ph.D. Diss.; Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1989), 133–36; Gerstenberger, *Psalms 1*, 154–55; idem, *Psalms 2*, 115.

[91] On the history of interpretation of the psalm, see Ackermann, "Psalm 82," 1–79. Most modern studies seek the legendary original meaning of the psalm, a quest not taken here. An exception is Handy, "Problem."

[92] See n. 115.

[93] Grammatically, since it stands in a non-verbal sentence with the plural pronoun and is paralleled by the plural בני עליון, and theologically, since its referents are declared mortal in v. 7.

second occurrence in v. 1b after בקרב, it is better seen as a reference to a plurality of beings, in parallel to בעדת אל. As a further complication, there is no internal constraint within the psalm which forces the same identification of *elohim* in v. 1b and v. 6. The *elohim* in v. 1b may form the audience which looks on while all (כלכם) the other *elohim* in the dock are pronounced mortal in v. 7. Thus *elohim* appears in the psalm with at least two and probably three referents, to God and to some other beings. Who are these other "gods"? Two alternatives are found in the history of the interpretation of the psalm. The *elohim* may be either divine beings or a group of humans.[94]

Support for viewing the *elohim* as humans is found in rabbinic traditions. According to one tradition, the first part of the psalm (vv. 1–5) concerns God's rebuke of unjust human judges and rulers within Israel (*b. Sanh.* 6b–7a; *b. Sotah* 47b; *b. Abot* 30; *b. Ber.* 6a; *Midr.* Ps 82). The scriptural basis for this move lies in the interpretation of האלהים in Exod 21:6; 22:7 as human judges.[95] Another tradition explains vv. 6–7 as a pronouncement of judgment on Israel at Sinai (*b. Abod. Zar.* 5a; *Sipre Piska* 320).[96] According to this story, when Israel received the Torah at Sinai, it also received immortality. Since immortality is the hallmark of divinity, the people at that time could quite properly be called אלהים. However, their immortality was short-lived, being lost when the nation turned to worship the Golden Calf, the event that prompted the utterance of vv. 6–7.

Although the rabbinical traditions are much later than the Second Temple period, it is impossible to prove that they do not reflect positions congruent with earlier beliefs.[97] They might well have had their home in a trajectory in Judaism that eschewed belief in angelic beings.[98] Alternatively, there is evidence that the barrier between

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[94] Reviews of interpreters and their positions can be found in Jüngling, *Tod der Götter*, 18–23; Niehr, "Falsche Alternative," 94–95; Alonso Schökel, *Treinta Salmos*, 293–301.

[95] This interpretation is found in the targums. Cyrus Gordon argued that the original reference in Exodus was to court or household deities; see Gordon, "אלהים in its Reputed Meaning of *Rulers, Judges*," *JBL* 54 (1935): 139–44.

[96] Ackermann, "Rabbinic Interpretation"; Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 157.

[97] The quotation of Ps 82:6 in John 10:34, in the context of a claim for the divinity of Jesus, may provide some support for an early tradition of the application of the psalm to humans, but its role in the logic of the gospel passage is contested. See Emerton, "Psalm lxxxii"; idem, "Melchizedek"; Hanson, "John's Citation"; idem, "John's Citation Reconsidered"; Neyrey, "Psalm 82:6".

[98] The Mishnah has no references to angels and the Sadducees might also have

divine and human status was not thought to be absolute. In the Bible, the rulers of Tyre and Babylon are ironically described as holding divine status before their condemnation (Is 14:4–21; Ezek 28:1–19). Several hymns found at Qumran speak of the faithful in a way which suggests that they could be conceived of as already standing in the divine assembly.[99] In certain apocalyptic literature, investment with angelic attributes is part of the preparation required before the human recipient of the revelation can present themselves in heaven (e.g., *T. Levi* 8:2–3; *2 En.* 19:17; *Apoc. Zeph.* 2:3–4).[100] Under certain circumstances, humans could take on aspects of divine beings.

However, this line of interpretation is unsatisfying for two reasons.[101] First, the extant examples from rabbinic traditions split the psalm. The two interpretations apply to different halves of the psalm, they interpret *elohim* in different ways and cannot be harmonized. The infliction of mortality in vv. 6–7 is no punishment for those already mortal. More generally, a consistent interpretation of the whole psalm as the judgment on a class of powerful humans requires explanations of both the sin of the humans and how they achieved divine status and power prior to this sin. The examples of humans who cross the barrier into the divine realm given above do not provide a complete analogy.

The second difficulty is of a more political nature. Under the preceding interpretation, the psalm is critical of the national leadership, the same group who controlled the Jerusalem Temple. Yet this psalm was also adopted for use in the regular liturgy of the Temple and continued in use for a long time. These two statements do not sit comfortably together; further explanation is needed to reconcile them. For what reasons would the national leadership support a psalm which was widely interpreted as an attack on them?

The other alternative is to regard *elohim* as referring to some class of divine beings.[102] The case for the existence in Israel of beliefs in

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rejected their existence; see Salters, "Psalm 82,1," 227–28; E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 B.C.E.–66 C.E.* (London: SCM, 1992), 370–72.

[99] 1QH[a] VII, 21–22; XI, 19–23; XIV, 12–13; XV, 30–31; XIX, 10–14; 4Q491c. See further John J. Collins, "Powers in Heaven: God, Gods and Angels in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Religion in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. John J. Collins and Robert A. Kugler; SDSSRL; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000), 22–26.

[100] Himmelfarb, *Ascent*, 29–71.

[101] For an extended critique, see Ackermann, "Psalm 82," 37–54.

[102] Traditional studies of the psalm attempt to argue for some form of dependency

divine beings other than Yahweh has been well established for all stages of the tradition and all levels of material. In Canaanite and other ANE cultures, the dominant deity was surrounded by an assembly of other divine beings. References to such an assembly also appear in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Deut 32:8–9; 33:2–3; 1 Kgs 22:17–23; Job 1:6; 2:1; Is 6:1–13; Dan 7:10; Zech 3:1–10; Ps 29:1–2; 77:14; 89:6–9; 95:3; 96:4; 97:7, 9; 148:2).[103] The monotheistic tendency in Israel would not tolerate the existence of potent alternatives to Yahweh and, as a result, such rival "gods" were demoted to the status of servants or angels.[104] The extra-biblical literature from the Second

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between the imagery of the psalm and, say, Ugaritic material; see, e.g., Ackermann, "Psalm 82," 54–78. Since the interest in the present study is on the interpretation of the psalm in the late Second Temple period, correlative parallels with material from that period are of more relevance.

[103] Much has been written on the divine council in the Hebrew Bible; for some references, see Trudinger, "Psalms," 113 n. 115. The term עדת־אל, which occurs only at 82:1 in the Hebrew Bible, may reflect early traditions about the council. The title אל is another name for Yahweh in the MT and later literature, whatever may have been its earlier meaning or use in other cultures. See Frank M. Cross, "אֵל 'el," *TDOT* 1: 258–59; Otto Eissfeldt, "El and Jahweh," JSS 1 (1956): 35–37, repr. in vol. 3 of *Kleine Schriften* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1966), 386–97; Jüngling, *Tod der Götter*, 82–83. The MT elsewhere uses סוד for the divine council (Jer 23:18, 23; Amos 3:7; Job 15:28; Ps 25:14), and the עדת־יהוה is Israel (Num 27;17; 31:16; Josh 9:18; 22:16, 17). However, עדה does appear in Qumran, in relation to angels, אלים. See Carol A. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice: A Critical Edition* (HSS 27; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 29. The LXX also reads θεῶν in v. 1a. The different near-parallels to עדת־אל correlate with the different ways of identifying this group. For comments on the textual history of the variants, see Ackermann, "Psalm 82," 309–33; Gonzalez, "Psaume 82," 298–99; Mullen, "Divine Council," 230; Salters, "Psalm 82,1," 226; and also on the verse in general, Handy, "Problem."

[104] Another response was to do away with them completely. Second Isaiah moves in this direction, although the author still seems to assume the existence of the divine council (Is 40). It has been suggested that, like Second Isaiah, Ps 82 represents a transitional phase in the development of a monotheistic worldview. At its start, other divine beings exist. By its conclusion, their end is in sight. See Coppens, "Trois Paralleles"; Gordon, "Psalm 82," 129; Höffken, "Werden und Vergehen," 129–30; Miller, "When Gods Meet"; Parker, "Reign of God"; Tsevat, "God and the Gods," 125, 134. Such a position presumes that all divine beings are condemned in vv. 6–7, an assumption that goes beyond the information given in the psalm. Further, even if the psalm was originally crafted to prepare for a transition to monotheism, by the late Second Temple period, the dominance of the monotheistic faith would have significantly altered its force. Similarly, even if the early creator of the psalm envisioned Yahweh as a deity subsidiary to El, who was the leader of the assembly (as argued by Eissfeldt), by the later period this mode of interpretation would have been submerged in monotheism and עדת־אל became a "frozen term." See Ackermann, "Psalm 82," 306–35; Eissfeldt, "El and Jahweh," 29–30; Stendebach, "Glaube und Ethos," 434.

Temple period contains many references to lesser divine beings alongside (or opposite) Yahweh.[105] Systematization of these references is difficult, if not impossible, as no coherent system of angelology existed in this period. In some works, divine beings hardly appear; in others they are the main players (compare the roles of angelic beings in 1 Macc and the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*). Instead a few relevant observations will be made.

The divine beings around Yahweh had two primary roles. One was to give honor – praise and worship – to Yahweh (*T. Levi* 3:8; *1 En.* 61:10–12; *Songs of Sabbath Sacrifice*). The other was to assist God in the governance of the universe. So, for instance, Deut 32:8–9 describes the commissioning of angels to oversee the affairs of gentile nations.[106] The tradition of angelic involvement in human affairs developed in the later literature. In tandem with the growing emphasis on the transcendence of God came an emphasis on the role of angels as intermediaries for God (*Jub.* 2:18; 15.31; *T. Levi* 3). Most angels served faithfully in the entourage of Yahweh. There were other celestial beings who were believed to be in opposition to Yahweh (as in *1 En.* 6–21 and *Jub.* 5:1–14). In the Qumran material, there are many references to divine beings who work against righteousness on the earth.[107] Their leader is often identified as Belial, and he, along with his myrmions, exercises control in the present (e.g.,

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[105] Studies on the angelology of the period include G. B. Caird, *Principalities and Powers: A Study in Pauline Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956); Wesley Carr, *Angels and Principalities: The Background, Meaning and Development of the Pauline Phrase hai archai kai hai exousiai* (SNTSMS 42; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 25–40; Maxwell J. Davidson, *Angels at Qumran: A Comparative Study of 1 Enoch 1–36, 72–108 and Sectarian Writings from Qumran* (JSPSup 11; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992); Menachem Mansoor, *The Thanksgiving Hymns: Translated and Annotated with an Introduction* (*STDJ* 3; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1961), 77–84; Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 23–38.

[106] Reading the LXX for Deut 32:8–9, which is supported by a fragment from Qumran, this passage is frequently interpreted as the inauguration of a special class of angels who govern the nations, a concept which may also occur in other places (*Jub.* 15:31; Dan 10:13, 20, where the princes of Persia and Greece stand over against the angelic prince Michael). On the other hand, Carr demurs, arguing that it is more accurate to remain with the observation that angels, as agents of Yahweh, had dealings with nations, rather than to limit consideration to an overly-restrictive class of "angels of the nations"; see *Angels and Principalities*, 30–34, esp. 34. For the role of the council in government in the Hebrew Bible, see also Miller, "Sovereignty," idem, "Cosmology and World Order in the Old Testament: The Divine Council as Cosmic-Political Symbol," *HBT* 9 (1987): 53–78; Mullen, "Divine Council," 279.

[107] Davidson, *Angels at Qumran*, passim.

1QM XIII, 10–12, XIV, 9). A well-known passage in the Rule of the Community speaks of two angels who guide human ways (1QS III–V). In particular, the Angel of Darkness is responsible for all the afflictions that befall the righteous (1QS III, 20–24, cf. *Jub.* 10:1–14). Uniformly across the literature there is the vision that ultimately the activities of such divine beings will be stopped and they themselves will be judged and condemned.[108]

Belief in supernatural powers was widespread in Judaism. Philo spoke of heavenly beings other than the supreme God; his thought, however, is complex, combining Jewish and Greek concepts. Such beings were mediators betweeen the transcendent God and the world, and thus, depending on the topic under discussion, might be conceived of as manifestations of the divinity inseparable from the Godhead or as independent beings, performing the role of messengers to humanity or priests in the heavenly Temple.[109] The apostle Paul, writing to a congregation containing both Jews and Gentiles, referred to the control exercised in the world by certain supernatural spirits (Gal 4:1–11).[110] Elsewhere Paul speaks of angels who are in line for judgment (1 Cor 6:3), and his references to the powers who control the world but lack knowledge and are destined for destruction probably refer to supernatural beings (1 Cor 2:6–8; 1 Cor 15:24).

Many terms are used to denote divine beings. In the Qumran library, one of these is אלהים.[111]

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[108] Cf. Is 24:21. The details of the doom of the evil angels vary. Their fate may be destruction (*Jub.* 5:10–11; 1QM II, 16, XIII, 16) or, more frequently, eternal torment (1QS III, 11–14; *1 En.* 21). Psalm 82 is among the more humane texts in promising only the death sentence to the אלהים. In the HB, it is the only text to anticipate the death of a class of divine beings. Other texts refer only to the death of a single being (Is 14:4–21; Ezek 28:1–19).

[109] On Philo's thought, see, e.g., Baudouin Decharneux, *L'ange, le devin et le prophète: Chemins de la parole dans l'ouevre de Philon d'Alexandrie dit "le Juif"* (Spiritualités et pensées libres 2; Brussels: Université de Bruxelles, 1994); Erwin R. Goodenough, *An Introduction to Philo Judaeus* (2d ed.; New York: Barnes and Noble, 1962), 82, 100–110; Schürer, *History* 3/2:881–85.

[110] His description of them as "spirits who are not by nature gods" recalls the attitude taken in Is 40–55 and Ps 82. For the Pauline attitude to divine beings see Caird, *Principalities and Powers*, and Carr, *Angels and Principalities*.

[111] Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 23–29, esp. 24. The Syriac version also renders "gods" in Ps 82:1b by "angels" and the LXX has θεόι. In 4 QFlor 1:19, the term "holy ones" refers to the heavenly council, not humans; see George J. Brooke, *Exegesis At Qumran: 4QFlorilegium in its Jewish Context* (JSOTSup 29; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 181–83. A list of terms for the divine entities is given in Cooke, "Sons," 44.

One Qumran document is particularly pertinent for the study of Psalm 82. The Melchizedek scroll (11QMelch) quotes Ps 82:1–2.[112] According to the interpretation given in this scroll, Melchizedek is the divine being (אלהים) who acting on behalf of God (אל) and with the assistance of other angels (אלים) passes judgment on Belial and the spirits of his lot.

This review of angelology shows that in the late Second Temple period, there was a rich speculative background against which Ps 82 might well be interpreted as a description of the pronouncement of the death sentence in the heavenly court upon unjust divine beings. Moreover, at least one interpretation of the psalm along these lines existed. While an interpretation of the psalm in terms of the judgment of human rulers cannot be dismissed, it is probable that for the majority of listeners, the psalm would conjure up images of the judgment of angels.

Nevertheless, the distinction between these two interpretative approaches to the identification of the *elohim* in Ps 82 should not be pressed too far. In any period there may have been multiple understandings, or complex understandings that exceed the simple distinction made above between "divine beings" and "humans." The spirit and human realms were believed to be closely associated, so that a human could be viewed as following the (mis)guidance of a dominating divine being.[113] The condemnation of one implied the condemnation of the other. In condemning the angels for supporting the mistreatment of the poor, the psalm condemns such mistreatment and those who carry it out.

The opening verse of the psalm is terse. Ostensibly, it sets the scene for the following speeches – God in the divine assembly. Yet the actual scene is blurred. The reader must struggle to give meaning to the description.[114] Several things contribute to this. The double use of the term אלהים in reference to God and another unspecified group has a disorienting effect, causing the hearers to pause to unravel the connotations and determine the referents.[115] The action of God

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[112] M. de Jonge and A. S. van der Woude, "11QMelchizedek and the New Testament," *NTS* 12 (1966): 301–26.

[113] Ps 106:35–38, Is 44:28; 45:1–4; see Niehr, "Falsche Alternative"; Gonzalez, "Psaume 82," 300; Smick, "Mythopoetic Language," 96–97; Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51–100* (WBC 20; Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 340–41.

[114] Handy, "Sounds," 52–54.

[115] As Ps 82 is found in the Elohistic Psalter, it is possible that the divine name

is startling. For the deity to stand suggests that the customary state of rest has been broken and something extraordinary is about to take place. The word נצב itself does not automatically imply a scene of judgment. On the contrary, rulers and judges usually sat when they presided, while others, including an accuser, stood. So the opening words of the psalm to some extent lead the hearer away from the conclusion that a judgment scene is coming.[116] The uncertainty in the identification of the divine audience has been noted above. The verb שׁפט is rife with ambiguity. Its meanings can range from "to govern" in a general sense, through to the precise act of rendering a legal decision, "to judge."[117] It is a keyword in the psalm, appearing four times (vv. 1, 2, 3, 8). However in its first occurrence, its meaning is left open. The cumulative effect of the first verse is to prepare the listener for a momentous action of God in heaven, but more than this it does not say. It reveals, so to speak, a region for exploration rather than a path to be taken.

The path emerges as the psalm progresses. The next section discloses part of the reason that God is standing (vv. 2–4). It contains both a pronouncement (v. 2) and admonition (vv. 3–4). The keyword שׁפט appears twice in this section, and the parallel statements indicate that its semantic range is now narrowed down to that of showing partiality in judgment, either to the wicked or the poor. Both v. 2 and vv. 3–4 open with an occurrence of שׁפט and close with a reference to the wicked in a construct chain with a body

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once stood in vv. 1a, 8. Many commentators read it there, e.g., Ackermann, "Psalm 82," 273–79; Anderson, *Psalms* 2:593; Gerstenberger, *Psalms 1*, 153–54; Jüngling, *Tod der Götter*, 71, 80; Stendebach, "Glaube und Ethos," 425. Tsevat accepts the alteration on the added grounds that the present from is "stylistically gauche and likely to confuse the reader" ("God and the Gods," 126). Yet an element of confusion may have been the deliberate intention of the poet.

[116] With hindsight one can slip past this difficulty, e.g., one can find examples of judgment given standing (Is 3:13; Ps 76:10), argue for the less remarkable meaning "to preside" (1 Sam 19:20), or suggest that the psalm shows God as both judge and prosecutor. See, e.g., Ackermann, "Psalm 82," 306–35; Mitchell Dahood, *Psalms II: 51–100: Introduction, Translation, and Notes* (AB 17; New York: Doubleday, 1968), 299; Jüngling, *Tod der Götter*, 84; Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 269; Morgenstern, "Psalm 82," 71; Tsevat, "God and the Gods," 127. The potential for radically differing interpretations, such as Parker's counter-proposal, that the psalm depicts the *subordinate* deity Yahweh revolting against the high god El, demonstrates the ambiguity latent in the first line ("Reign of God," esp 536–37).

[117] Cf. Dan 9:12; Ps 2:10; 148:11. In the translation it has been consistently rendered "to rule" as this carries both forensic and administrative nuances; see Herbert Niehr, "שָׁפַט sapat," *ThWAT* 8:425–28.

part.[118] These structural parallels shape the section into a tight block.

Although framed as a question, v. 2 is an accusation of unjust behavior, which, when spoken by God, cannot be refuted. In light of the admonitions that follow in vv. 3–4, it has the force of a command to desist.[119] The second part of the verse is epexegetical. In it, evil is incarnated as the wicked. The accused party is not identified in this verse. All that can be inferred about its members is that they render judgments biased towards the wicked, another unidentified group. Thus they have power in human society, but are not, perhaps, of the same ilk as the wicked.

The next two verses contain positive admonitions concerning the behavior expected by God of a party with such power. In their content, vv. 3–4 may be considered an expanded reversal of v. 2. They command not merely unbiased behavior but positive partiality to the poor and they repeat this command three times (vv. 3–4a).[120] The final sentence (v. 4b) returns forcefully to the matter of the relationship with the wicked: it is not a matter of not having dealings with the wicked, but rather of outright opposition to them. The repetitions and parallel structure in these two verses emphasize the requirement of partiality.[121] This is the ethical heart of the psalm.

Who are the poor and the wicked? This is a difficult question. The different terms for the poor in the Hebrew Bible can carry many nuances, indicating variously material or economic lack, lack of power (although not impoverishment), piety in an emphatic or characteristic way, or, at another extreme, functioning only as a vague, almost empty, designator for some class of people.[122] The

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[118] On the structure of this section, see Ackermann, "Psalm 82," 335–63; Dickson, "Terminology," 1036–37; Handy, "Sounds," 54–5; Prinsloo, "Psalm 82," 222–3.

[119] So Ackerman, but Tate disagrees; see Ackermann, "Psalm 82," 337; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 335–36; also Craig, "Psalm 82," 282.

[120] A similar set of commands is found in Zech 7:8–10, where their neglect is also a reason for disaster; see Rokay, "Stadttor."

[121] Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 336; Tsevat, "God and the Gods," 128.

[122] On the use of the terms for poor and wicked, see Steven J. L. Croft, *The Identity of the Individual in the Psalms* (JSOTSup 44; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 15–72, esp. 47–48, 69–72. A shorter summary of terms for the poor can be found in Sue Gillingham, "The Poor in the Psalms," *ExpTim* 100 (1988): 15–19; see also Richard J. Coggins, "The Old Testament and the Poor," *ExpTim* 99 (1987): 11–14; J. Emmette Weir, "The Poor Are Powerless: A Response to R. J. Coggins," *ExpTim* 100 (1988): 13–15; Jüngling, *Tod der Götter*, 85–90; Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Theology of the Psalms* (trans. Keith Crim; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986), 150–54. The classic work is Harris Birkeland, *Ani und Anaw in den Psalmen*

words listed in Ps 82:3–4 span all these nuances in their occurrences elsewhere. It is fruitless to try to determine a precise referent for the poor in this psalm by harmonizing the different terms. Rather, their collection here is part of a poetic device by which the psalmist indicates the comprehensiveness of the thrice repeated command.[123] Likewise "wicked" is another plastic term, best understood here not as an artificial amalgam of meanings drawn from other psalms, but in relation to its function in this psalm, as those in society who gain advantage through the judgments against the poor.[124]

What can be said, however, is that the poor are powerless in every way. Those accused have power and are misusing it. The poor, on the other hand, not only lack power, they also lack access to power. A third group is the wicked, who exercise power in two directions. Through the judgments of those accused, they have gained control of the poor.[125] At the same time, they themselves have power over the accused, inasmuch as they are able to influence the accused who as a result find for them and not the poor.[126] Verses 2–4 condemn this situation and order its reversal. The type of government demanded by God is one that rules in favor of the poor not the wicked.[127] The poor find a powerful protector in God.

(Norske Videnskaps-Akademi I Oslo. II. Hist.-Filos. Klasse 1932/4; Oslo: Jacob Dybwad, 1933). A constructive synthesis of issues associated with poverty in the Psalter is found in J. David Pleins, *The Social Visions of the Hebrew Bible: A Theological Synthesis* (Loiusville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 420–37. יהום is used in a metaphorical sense in Lam 5:3.

[123] Jüngling, *Tod der Götter*, 85.

[124] In the late Second Temple period, identification of the wicked would have varied with the interpreter. Someone from the Qumran community might have seen in these verses an affirmation of divine favor for the covenanters against the activities of Belial, another might see them as condemning the oppression of Israel by foreign states under the direction of their divine leaders, and yet another might find only judicial ethics.

[125] יד is a common metaphor for power (v. 4b).

[126] See Dickson, "Empowerment"; idem, "Terminology." Gordon cites the example of the treatment of Aqhat at the hands of Anat as an example of the existence of traditions concerning the misuse of authority by a deity ("Psalm 82," 130). The parallel lacks precision. Anat is motivated by desire for Aqhat's prize bow and is the direct beneficiary of his murder, but in Ps 82, there is no hint that the accused *elohim* will benefit from the activity of the wicked.

[127] The conception, that the protection of the powerless was the divine will, was common in the ANE; see F. Charles Fensham, "Widow, Orphan and Poor in the Ancient Near Eastern Legal and Wisdom Literature," *JNES* 21 (1962): 129–39; Douglas A. Knight, "Cosmogony and Order in the Hebrew Tradition," in *Cosmogony and Ethical Order: New Studies in Comparative Ethics* (ed. Robin W. Lovin and Frank E. Reynolds; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 133–57.

The accused, however, do not accept the requirement for justice demanded by God. Their reaction and its effect on the cosmos are described in v. 5.[128] This verse is more than just a descriptive aside. It is, rather, the immediate justification for the radical sentence that is pronounced in vv. 6–7. This becomes evident when the plot of the psalm is traced out. In v. 2, a group is accused of misuse of power. In vv. 3–4, the correct behavior is presented. It would be both illogical and unfair to move straight to the punishment of the group immediately after the warning. Instead, the group must be given opportunity to respond to the reproof. If they take it to heart, well and good. If not, then punishment is deserved. The period for reform occurs between vv. 4 and 5. Sadly, as v. 5 shows, the accused are not prepared to accept God's rule. They persist in ways that undermine the stability of creation. They do not acknowledge (ידע) the admonition of vv. 3–4 nor even understand (בין) its reason.[129] The divine speech in the psalm thus falls into three sections: vv. 2–4, reproof and admonition; v. 5, statement noting the failure of the beings to reform; vv. 6–7, pronouncement of sentence.

Continued aberrant behavior has consequences for the divine beings and for the world. For the divine beings, failure to acknowledge God's favored style of rule calls their status into question. Divine beings, by virtue of their proximity to God, were thought to have

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[128] The subject of v. 5 is not clearly defined. It may be either the poor, the wicked or the accused. As regards the first group, it is naïve to assume that the poor did not realize what was happening to them, so it is unlikely the verse refers to them. The distinction between the wicked and the accused in this context is small. If the wicked do not understand, then how much more the accused who facilitate their wickedness. Aurally and grammatically, however, the continuation of the plural third person would suggest the accused are still in view. Finally, identification of the subject with the accused is the only route that removes the difficulty of moving directly from warning to punishment (see below).

[129] On ידע and בין, see Ackermann, "Psalm 82," 364–70. Isaiah 44:18ab is a formal parallel to v. 5ab. The resemblance is misleading. There, the description is grounded on the material nature of idols. Being made of wood and stone, they are incapable of any mental activity. In Ps 82, the accused are capable of volition and activity; indeed this is the cause of their condemnation; see Jüngling, *Tod der Götter*, 91–92. Isaiah of Babylon argues that other deities are ineffectual or non-existent; Ps 82 is predicated on their harmful reality. Indeed, volition on the part of the accused is vital to the logic of the psalm. It is sometimes suggested that the angels are inherently incapable of reforming; see, e.g., Craig, "Psalm 82," 283; Tsevat, "God and the Gods," 128. However, if this were so, the admonition in vv. 2–4 would be sham and the punishment in vv. 6–7 unjust; see Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 337.

access to knowledge beyond that afforded to humans.[130] For divine beings to be accused of lack of knowledge would cast doubt on their divine status (v. 5ab). In this way, v. 5 prefigures vv. 6–7.

As a consequence of the actions of the accused, the foundations of the earth are shaken (v. 5d). Here the psalmist is drawing on traditions that tie the stability of the created order to the presence of justice in society.[131] The imagery in v. 5d suggests the fragility of even the most sturdy parts of creation in the face of injustice (cf. Is 24:17–20).[132] Yet it is frequently asserted that God will ensure that such an occurrence does not take place (Ps 75:4; 93:1; 96:10; 104:5). In effect, the psalm aligns itself with this second view, as it depicts God acting to remove the causes of instability.[133] Like the Pharaoh of the Exodus, the attitude adopted by the accused threatens to undo creation.[134] The term "darkness" (חֹשֶׁךְ) captures this sense, as it conjures up images of the primeval, chaotic state of the earth, present before creation (Gen 1:2) and recreated through activities of injustice (Is 59:9; Exod 10:21–8). In addition, the term is rich in connotations of evil, powerlessness and death.[135] In relation to the preceding statements in v. 5ab, it also calls to mind in a metaphorical way the mental state of the divine beings who reject counsel, or their essential nature (cf. Eccles 2:13–14). The description in v. 5c finds an echo in 1QM XII, 10–12, where the angels of destruction walk in the ways of darkness.

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[130] For example, knowledge is passed from God to the angels at creation (11Q5 XXVI, 11–12; 1QH XIII, 11); one of the defining features of apocalyptic literature is the presence of a supernatural being who mediates the revelation, (John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to the Jewish Matrix of Christianity* [2d ed.; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998], 4–5); knowledge is the most prominent quality of the angels in the Sabbath Songs (see Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice*, 30).

[131] Dahood, *Psalms II*, 270; Knight, "Cosmogony and Order"; Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 157; Mullen, "Divine Council," 233; H. H. Schmidt, "Creation, Righteousness and Salvation," in *Creation in the Old Testament* (ed. Bernard Anderson; IRT 6; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 104; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 337; Tsevat, "God and the Gods," 128–29.

[132] This imagery frequently appears in the contexts of creation, judgment or theophany; see Jüngling, *Tod der Götter*, 93–94.

[133] The psalm contains an allusion to creation and a judgment of gods. These are not tied in with a myth of a cosmic battle, but rather justified on the basis of the treatment of the poor. See Gonzalez, "Psaume 82," 301–2.

[134] Terence E. Fretheim, "The Plagues as Ecological Signs of Historical Disaster," *JBL* 110 (1991): 385–96, esp. 391–92.

[135] Ackermann, "Psalm 82," 370–73; Johannes Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture I–II* (1926; repr. 4 vols in 2; London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 464–65.

In vv. 6–7, what is now inevitable is revealed; punishment is pronounced. Creation references appear again in v. 6. This time, it is the creative word that was spoken (אמר; Gen 1) to the divine beings (cf. Deut 32:8–12).[136] If the creation of such beings results in the undoing of the creation of the world, then God will act to reverse their creation. The sentence pronounced in v. 7 is the removal of immortality. Since immortality was the hallmark of divinity this sentence amounts to the demotion from divine status.[137] Although the sense of v. 7 is clear, some details of identification are blurred. Does אדם refer to the first human, condemned for disobedience, or to a generic human? Does the parallel term, שׂרים, also refer to humans, or a class of angels?[138] What is the time frame for the execution of the sentence? Death is inescapable for these (formerly) divine beings, but it is not said whether it will immediate or deferred.[139]

In v. 8 another voice speaks, either that of the seer, or the congregation, or its representatives. Formally, the verse forms an inclusion with v. 1 based on אלהים, שׁפט, and the synonyms נצב/קום, and

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[136] There are three ways in which אמרתי is usually interpreted: as a reference to the time in the past when God (the speaker) appointed or created the divine beings, as here (see also Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 338–39); as an ironical or sarcastic statement made by God or the speaking voice (Gonzalez, "Psaume 82," 307; Prinsloo, "Psalm 82," 226); as an admission of a mistaken assessment of the nature of the beings, typically one spoken by a human voice (e.g., Dahood, *Psalms II*, 270) although Parker imagines Yahweh to be the fallible speaker who is wresting the divine assembly from El (Parker, "Reign of God," 539–40). The first option has the advantage of operating with a familiar meaning for the verb and a well-attested context. Both the second and third interpretations require that the accused have claimed or exhibited traits of divinity at some time, in order to have a point to which the irony may attach to or on which the false assessment may build. The psalm gives no hint of this circumstance and the provision of such an explanatory context calls for more speculation than is needed for the first interpretation.

[137] Craig, "Psalm 82," 283; Gonzalez, "Psaume 82," 307; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 339; Tsevat, "God and the Gods," 129–30.

[138] The polysemy in שׂר is not as obvious as that for אדם. As a title for an angel it is found in Dan 10:13, 20; 12:1; Josh 5:14–18; Is 9:5, and, at Qumran, in 4Q401 6.4. Morgenstern presents a case for this interpretation; see "Psalm 82," 98, and also the comment on v. 7. On the other hand, references to a generic human and princes may be a merism, indicating that the angels now share the ineluctable fate of all humanity; see Dahood, *Psalms II*, 270.

[139] W. G. Lambert notes that gods in the ANE could die, not of old age or natural causes, but from violent circumstances; Ackerman likewise argues that the sentence implies a sudden unnatural death for the errant divine beings. See Lambert, "The Theology of Death," in *Death in Mesopotamia: Papers Read At the XXVIe Recontre assyriologue internationale* (ed. Bendt Alster; CSA 8; Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1980), 64–65; Ackermann, "Psalm 82," 400–23; also Morgenstern, "Psalm 82," 73.

also links with v. 5 through אֶרֶץ. A complex dynamic of interpretation is set up by these connections. In v. 1, the object governed by שְׁפֹט was not made clear. Now the verb has an object, אֶרֶץ. What was left unspecified in v. 1 is here defined. God is called on to rise to judge/rule the earth. The earth is the very place whose existence is threatened by the activity of those he accused (v. 5). So, even as v. 8 completes v. 1, it throws the interpreter back into the center of the psalm, to v. 5. From there one moves to the sad story of vv. 2–4, 6–7.[140] In v. 8, the ambiguity of v. 1 is removed. Several options exist for the translation of v. 8b.[141] Whichever is chosen, the statement makes it clear that some form of relationship of possession exists between God and the peoples, so that the act of ruling by God is entirely fitting.

The function of the last verse in the psalm can be interpreted in two ways. One is to see it as part of a temporal sequence following on from the story depicted in vv. 1–7. After God has tidied up the problems in heaven, the next stage will be to move on to those on earth.[142] The cry קוּמָה is found several times in the Psalter, frequently in laments and usually introduces a request that God deliver some oppressed party for reasons given elsewhere in the psalm (Ps 3:8; 7:7; 17:13; 35:2; 9:20; 10:12; 44:27; 74:22; cf. 132:8).[143] That may well be its function in Ps 82. There is, however, a problem with seeing v. 8 as the next stage on from vv. 2–7. The story in vv. 2–7 is built on the belief in a close connection between activities in heaven and on earth, as evidenced by the ability of the accused to cause harm to people and the very fabric of the world. Their condemnation in heaven should have immediate impact on earth. In other words, as a plea, the cry in v. 8 is redundant.

An alternative interpretation builds on the mythology associated with the Temple. As was discussed for Ps 24, the Temple was believed

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[140] The path through the psalm can be signposted by a sequence of questions. Verse 1 leaves the hearer with the question: What is God judging? This is answered in v. 8, but the answer raises the question: Why judge the earth? An explanation appears in v. 5, namely the parlous state of creation, but then one asks: What has caused this state? The reason is given in vv. 2–4, which leads to the question: What is the cure? The ominous answer to this is found in vv. 6–7.

[141] See comment on v. 8 above.

[142] E.g., for Jüngling this verse gives the psalm an eschatological twist (*Tod der Götter*, 103–4).

[143] The parallels suggest that v. 8 may be seen either as an outright supplication or an acclamation that encourages God to act; see Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 339.

to be the closest point on earth to heaven, identifiable in some mysterious way with the heavenly palace of God.[144] Thus those present in the Temple precincts during the singing of Ps 82 might well imagine themselves as also present in the courts of heaven, and, in particular, as part of the divine assembly, witnessing God's speech. These observations suggest that v. 8, may be taken as a statement parallel to vv. 1–7 which summarizes the vision contained in those verses. The God rising to judge the earth (v. 8) is the God rising to reprove, then sentence, the angelic beings and their human minions. Seen in this way, the verse is a cry supporting God's righteous activity.

The image of Yahweh rising to intervene is also an acknowledgement of Yahweh's power and an avowal of faith in God's just rule against the presence of injustice. The connecting link here is the motif of rest or sleep.[145] Rest is the ideal state of the deity after the completion of creative activity. It is a symbol that the deity has set the world in order and removed all troubling elements. A call for Yahweh to rise up from rest both acknowledges that Yahweh is the absolute sovereign by assuming God is resting, and affirms a belief that Yahweh will remove the things that threaten creation. In short it is a statement that Yahweh can and will preserve creation. Such a double statement is present at the opening and close of Ps 82, while the middle verses depict God in action. The activity there is not that of a battle with chaos but words of reproof and condemnation.

The closing verse of the psalm is the one that makes the work a complete poem, rather than an account of a vision. It captures the essence of the preceding depiction of God's intervention in the world, and turns the prophetic vision into praise, celebrating God's power over the earth and interest in its well-being.

The theme of the psalm is that support for the poor is part of the divine ordering of the universe.[146] This is not argued as a

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[144] See n. 20.

[145] Niels-Erik A. Andreasen, "The Old Testament Sabbath: A Tradition-Historical Investigation" (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1971), 174–82; Bernard F. Batto, "The Sleeping God: An Ancient Near Eastern Motif of Divine Sovereignty," *Bib* 68 (1987): 153–77.

[146] Fleming's comment that "the psalm is thematically concerned with failures to do justice and the establishment of justice" ("Divine Council," 150) is valid, but can be made more precise through the observation that justice in this psalm is justice for the poor. A decision on the identity of the poor further refines the theme,

theological proposition, but played out as a short drama, or, in more modern terms, goes to air as a news bite from the heavenly court.

The presentation of the theme is couched in terms of condemnation and punishment. Disregard for this divine preference leads to the death sentence, even for beings with divine status. The theme comes to the surface in vv. 3–5, in which it is stated in a positive fashion (vv. 3–4) and then followed by a negative portrayal of the destructive effect of its abrogation on the created order.

Several motifs appear in the service of the theme. The scene is derived from that of a court in judgement. God is portrayed as ruler ("judge") of the whole universe, both heaven and earth (e.g., vv. 1, 8). God is owner of the earth (v. 8b). Social behavior affects the physical constitution of the world (v. 5), and this effect is expressed in terms of the architecture of the universe (namely, its foundations). There are two classes of people, the wicked and the poor. Proper behavior involves assistance (not oppression) of the poor. Angelic beings exist and some of these act contrary to the divine norms of behavior. Retribution applies: ingrained incorrect behavior is punished. There is also an obscure allusion to the process of creation of divine beings (v. 7).

God is portrayed as the ruler or judge who has authority over heaven and earth. God is active and concerned about the state of the created order. God's action, however, is not military, nor even forceful. It takes the form of pronouncements and commands. It appears (at least up to v. 8) that divine activity on earth is entrusted to intermediary agents. Although the condemned beings acted previously against God's wishes, there is no hint that they can oppose the sentence given by God or retaliate God in any way. God's rule is absolute.

Although the psalm is about social behavior, in the body of the psalm people appear only indirectly, as stereotyped elements in the speech of God. Two parties are described: the poor (אביון, רשׁ, דל, יתום, עני), who are oppressed, and the wicked (רשׁעים, עול), who oppress them. It appears that the poor have no effective power of their own. The wicked, on the other hand, are actively supported

for instance to one of social justice or to the exclusivist claims of a "pious" minority to divine favor.

by the divine beings who are condemned in the psalm, and over whom they appear to have some influence.

This direct absence of humans is offset by the identity of the speaking voice in v. 8. In vv. 2–7 the voice is God.[147] This is not the case for the first and last verses. In the first verse, the speaker is an agent who merely presents the context. However, the cry uttered in the last verse shows that the voice recognizes the plight of the poor and the need for divine action. The voice is that of a human. Such a cry would not be uttered with sincerity by one of the wicked. So the speaker of the last verse is either one of the poor or someone who has aligned themselves with their situation and supports the implementation of God's commands to rule for the poor.

There are other agents in the psalm, the most significant being the angelic beings. There are two groups of these, those in the gallery who observe the proceedings and those in the dock who are accused and condemned. Little is actually said about these beings, except that they have (or had) some authority over matters on earth. One might infer that they have enough free will to disobey God (and enough ignorance to fail to realize the consequences). The errant angels have no power to threaten God.

The earth also appears in the psalm (vv. 5, 8). It is the property of Yahweh and its stability depends on the behavior of others. As the property of Yahweh, it should be ruled by God.

As has been noted above, the behavioral norm which the psalm endorses is one of support for the poor. This group is not clearly defined by the psalm.

Some elements are notable for their absence. Military or warrior epithets are missing from the description of God. Common descriptive phrases often associated with God as judge or ruler (such as חסד, צדיק) are absent. "Enemies" do not appear in the psalm. There is no mention of worship, seeking God, honest speech or other behavioral norms. The fate of the wicked is not addressed directly (although it might be assumed from vv. 6–7) nor reward for the righteous or the poor.

[147] In v. 5, if not God, then an omniscient voice, see above, n. 86.

4. *Psalm 94*

1. God of vengeance, O Yahweh,
   God of vengeance, appear in splendor!
2. Arise, O Judge of the Earth,
   Rejoin [their] requital upon the arrogant!

3. How long will the guilty
   how long will the guilty exult?
4. They babble; they speak offensively,
   all the evil doers boast.
5. They crush your people, O Yahweh,
   and they violate your possession.
6. Widow and stranger they kill
   and orphans they murder,
7. All the while crowing, "Yah[weh] will not look,
   the God of Jacob will take no notice."
8. Understand, you most obtuse of the people;
   you fools, how long before you come to your senses?
9. Will not the one who planted the ear pay heed?
   Will not the one who created the eye see?
10. Will not the instructor of nations give censure
    the one who teaches a person knowledge [give rebuke].
11. Yahweh knows human ways,
    that they are of no substance.
12. Blessed is the person whom you teach,
    O Yah[weh],
    and whom you instruct from your Torah,
13. to give serenity to him during troubled times,
    until a pit is dug for the guilty.
14. For Yahweh will not abandon his people,
    and he will not desert his possession
15. until justice returns to the righteous one,
    and following this [to] all the upright of heart.

16. Who will rise on my behalf against the wicked?
    Who will stand for me against evil doers?
17. If Yahweh had not come to my aid,
    My life would have been silenced.
18. When I said, "My foot is slipping,"
    your faithfulness, O Yahweh, supported me.

19. When a maelstrom of worries raged within me,
your comfort soothed my soul.

20. Can a throne of destruction be associated with you,
[or] one who creates woe against [your] decree?
21. They join forces against the life of the righteous,
and condemn innocent blood.
22. But Yahweh remains a shelter for me,
and my God, my Rock of refuge.
23. He will rejoin their evil deeds on them;
He will destroy them because of their iniquity;
Yahweh, our God, will destroy them.

v. 1: The LXX adds τετράδι σαββάτων.
vengeance: The form נקמות is a plural of amplification; see GKC §124e.
appear in splendor: Some versions understand a hifil imperative for the form of the verb, הופיעה, and this has been read here. The imperative is in accord with the following verse. The discrepancy with the MT might have arisen from haplography. The alternative is to maintain the perfect (with the MT and LXX). This is supported by the inclusion formed by vv. 1 and 22–23. However, the psalm is not so much celebrating a past theophany of the divine judge (except for vv. 17–19), as seeking an intervention in the near future. This hopeful nuance is better captured by an imperative than by a blunt translation of the perfect as a past tense. One must also remember that the psalm was sung at the Tamid service. The difference between the pronunciation of הופיע and הופיעה, even if the former stood in the text used by the levitical choir, would have been slight, and the auditors would have readily assimilated the variant form to an imperative, in line with the following verse. See further n. 152.

v. 3: This verse is an example of an expanded colon, that is, two (or more) consecutive cola exhibiting both a high degree of repetition on a lexical level and a development (or completion) of thought in the second part. The semantic content of the expanded colon is equivalent to one statement; the incompleteness creates a feeling of anticipation or suspense in the hearer. Other examples occur in Ps 93:3, 4; 92:10. See Samuel E. Loewenstamm, "The Expanded Colon in Ugaritic and Biblical Verse," *JSS* 14 (1969): 176–96; idem, "The Expanded Colon, Reconsidered," *UF* 7 (1975): 261–64; Yitzhak Avishur, "Addenda to the Expanded Colon in Ugaritic and Biblical Verse," *UF* 4 (1972): 1–10; Edward L. Greenstein, "One More Step on the Staircase," *UF* 9 (1977): 77–86.

v. 4: The principal idea is expressed by the second verb in v. 4a; see GKC §120g. Dahood's suggestion that the force of "How long" in v. 3 carries into v. 4 is not necessary (*Psalms II*, 347). Verses 4–7 form a chiastic pattern, with v. 7 illustrating the essence of the offensive speech of the guilty.

v. 7: Imperfect with vav; see GKC §111t.

Yah: A short form of the divine name, יה, appears in vv. 7, 12. There is evidence that the utterance of this variant was unrestricted; see Patrick W. Skehan, "The Divine Name at Qumran, in the Masada Scroll, and in the Septuagint," *BIOSCS* 13 (1980): 24.

vv. 9, 10: The initial verbal forms can be repointed as participles (cf. LXX).

v. 10: *give rebuke*: The verb יכח in v. 10a can be understood as carrying over to v. 10b; see Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 484. Another alternative is to read מדעת ("Is the one who teaches humanity without knowledge?").

v. 12: This verse has been categorized as an example of a "pivot pattern" in Hebrew poetry; see Wilfred G. E. Watson, "The Pivot Pattern in Hebrew, Ugaritic and Akkadian Poetry," *ZAW* 88 (1976): 239–53. It is particularly long, but, as the MT agrees with 4QPs^{b}, there is no reason to presume that the form extant in the late Second Temple period was any different; see Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 484. The ms 4QPs^{b} has been published in D. Barthelemy and J. T. Milik, *Qumran Cave 1* (DJD 1; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 69; and Patrick W. Skehan, "A Psalm Manuscript From Qumran (4QPs^{b})," *CBQ* 26 (1964): 317.

v. 13a: This line is patient of several interpretations. The infinitive להשקיט may be circumstantial or final; see, respectively, Dahood, *Psalms II*, 348; and David M. Howard, *The Structure of Psalms 93–100* (BibJS 5; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 45. The מ may be construed as temporal (during) or causal (because of); see Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 414. The translation of the verse in discussed below.

v. 15: *righteous one*: Reading צדק as metonymy for צדיק (Howard, *Structure*, 48) and accepting the MT for v. 15b without alteration.

vv. 18, 19: The conditional clause with אם refers to the past (GKC §159l) and so the other verbs in vv. 18, 19, although in the imperfect, are taken to refer primarily to a past event; see Howard, *Structure*, 48; Dahood, *Psalms II*, 350.

v. 19: *comfort*: A plural of amplification; see GKC §124e.

v. 20: *associated*: The form היחברך is anomalous; see GKC §§60b, 63m.

against decree: The phrase עלי־הק can be interpreted either as the means by which those with authority create destruction, "by decree," or as indicating the opposition between these authorities and the divine order, as here. The parallel use of על in the next verse and the Syriac version support the latter; see Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 485.

vv. 21, 22: The verb forms can be construed as referring to the past (recalling the situation in vv. 17–19, as Dahood, *Psalms II*, 351) or the present (returning to the distress noted in the opening verses of the psalm, as Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 485). Although the latter option has been followed here, the choice of tenses is an artifact of the translation process. The ambiguity increases the richness of meaning in the psalm and may well have been intentional.

v. 23: The opening vav-consecutive is translated as if it continues the sequence of the preceding verse; see GKC §111w.

This psalm exhibits a mixed form, combining a communal lament (vv. 1–7), an individual lament (vv. 16–23) and a central "sapiential" section with blessing (vv. 8–15).[148] The complexity of form raises the question of whether one type is dominant. Should the psalm be classified as a wisdom psalm? Certainly retribution is a typical motif in wisdom material and appears in all sections of Ps 94. However, the motif of retribution does not categorize wisdom literature. A request for the destruction of enemies and personal protection, which is the manner in which retribution is expressed in the first and third sections of the psalm, is also extremely frequent in laments, and is often found expressed as a petition that the evil-doers receive back what they have done (e.g., Ps 7:16–17; 17:12–13; 31:19; 35:7–8).[149] In fact, the lament material dominates in Ps 94. Not only is there

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[148] Gunkel, *Introduction*, 121, 308–9.

[149] The number of wisdom elements in the psalm is also open to question. J. Kenneth Kuntz identified constructions and vocabulary which he claimed were characteristic of wisdom psalms and noted that several of these identifiers are found in Ps 94 – the blessing (אשרי), the rhetorical question and 15 typical words; see Kuntz, "The Canonical Wisdom Psalms in Ancient Israel: Their Rhetorical, Thematic and Formal Dimensions," in *Rhetorical Criticism: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg* (ed. Jared J. Jackson and Martin Kessler; PTMS 1; Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1974), 191, 202, 207. (Kuntz limited his conclusion to the observation that vv. 8–15 formed a wisdom component of the psalm.) David N. Freedman argued that the psalm was a non-alphabetic acrostic, on the basis of the number of verses (22+1) and their meter; see Freedman, "Acrostic Poems in the Hebrew Bible: Alphabetic and Otherwise," *CBQ* 48 (1986): 426–28. However, the frequent occurrence of some word or feature in wisdom literature does not, by itself, imply that this word or feature is characteristic of that tradition. One must also examine its occurrences in other literature. R. Norman Whybray has done this for the wisdom literature, and his list of words that do *not* unequivocally characterize this literature includes several that Kuntz has identified in Ps 94, including אשרי; see Whybray, *The Intellectual Tradition in the Old Testament* (BZAW 135; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1974), 124–34. (Whybray does accept that Ps 94 has wisdom *elements*, 154). Further the rhetorical question is found in many contexts (e.g., 2 Sam 16:9), and the non-alphabetic acrostic is not exclusively sapiential (cf. Lam 5). So, on balance, Ps 94 may have less wisdom elements than is commonly recognized. This speaks against the claim of David M. Howard that the combination of the sapiential content of vv. 8–15 and the acrostic form "suggests that the author's primary concerns were sapiential despite the prominence of the lament forms," (*The Structure of Psalms 93–100* [BibJS 5; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1997], 53). Another argument for regarding Ps 94 as a sapiential psalm has been advanced by Freddy de Meyer, "La sagesse Psalmique et le Psaume 94," *Bijdr* 42 (1981): 22–45. As part of this, de Meyer first redefines in an expansive way what is meant by a sapiential psalm and then accepts a broad range of indicators for the characterization of wisdom literature, such as those identified by Kuntz (23–25, 34). In expanding the definition, however, he has disassociated wisdom from the categories of form, so that sapiential psalms may take diverse forms – lament, thanksgiving, etc. In other words, the question of form remains. In addition, his use of indicators is maximalist and uncritical.

quantitatively more of it in the psalm, but lament defines the context in which the sapiential section is read. The psalm opens not with a blessing fixed on spiritual orientation (cf. Ps 1:1–2; 119:1–2) but with an invocation and cry for intercession based on present physical experience. The hearers of the psalm turn first to God to express pain, not to seek Torah. Similarly, after the recitation of the central section, the focus again swings to actual suffering, this time experienced in the past by the speaking voice and employed to illustrate the confidence that Yahweh can indeed be relied on to take action. Within this framework of bleak lament and hope, the central section serves not so much a didactic purpose, as an encouraging and consoling one.[150] The psalm, though containing sapiential elements, is closer to one of lament than instruction.

One might go farther. From the perspective of the recital of the psalm in the morning worship service, a service carried out on behalf of all the people, the verses associated with the individual lament can be construed as a variation on the communal lament form, in which the communal experience is expressed by their representative(s).[151] Nevertheless, caution must be observed. The complexity of the psalm, with the strong presence of sapiential elements and elements of trust and comfort, speaks against a simple classification of the whole as a communal lament.[152]

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[150] It has been suggested that the performance of a lament was often accompanied by the interjection of a short oracle of hope; see John H. Hayes, *Understanding the Psalms* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Judson Press, 1976), 62–64. Ps 94:8–15 functions in a similar way.

[151] The suggestion that the psalm be interpreted as communal has been made before, but usually in regard to its preexilic use. Mowinckel, for example, regarded the psalm as one of national lamentation sung by the king (*Psalms*, 1:219, 227); also J. H. Eaton, *Kingship and the Psalms* (SBT 2/32; Naperville, Ill.: Alec R. Allenson, 1976), 59–60. The performance of material written in the first person by a *choir* of levites naturally raises questions of interpretation.

[152] Dahood views the psalm as one of thanksgiving rather than lament, with vv. 1 and 22–23 thanksgivings for Yahweh's action and vv. 2–21 a reiteration of the lament that earlier had called for divine intervention (*Psalms II*, 346–47, 351). In line with this, he selects only the temporally past connotations of the verbal forms in the psalm, reading preterites when necessary. It may be objected, however, that the psalm lacks important markers of a thanksgiving, notably any call to praise or give thanks. Also, whereas thanksgiving psalms sometimes contain recollections of distress and lament, never are these as dominant as in this psalm. Finally, although one can read the verbs as preterites, this reading is not necessary, and there is no reason to presume that the verbal forms would have been understood in this way in the late Second Temple period.

Structurally, the psalm may be divided into the three parts corresponding to the opening and closing laments and the central section as indicated above. These may be further refined.[153] The communal lament begins with the invocation of God (vv. 1–2), before the plea (v. 3) and the description of distress (vv. 4–7). The central "sapiential" section (vv. 8–15) can be divided into two on the basis of the ostensible addressees, either the guilty (vv. 8–11) or the people (vv. 12–15). Likewise the last section can be divided into two parts each introduced by a rhetorical question (vv. 16–19, 20–22). The first part has the character of a personal testimony to the people and the second encouragement by way of address to God. The last verse of the psalm recalls the opening invocation.

Despite the complexity of its form, Ps 94 ought to be treated as a unified work not a composite. There are internal indicators in the psalm that evidence its unity. These are most easily noticed by observing the repetitions in vocabulary: שׁפט (vv. 2, 15), מתי (vv. 3, 8), רשׁע (vv. 3, 13, 21), פעלי־און (vv. 4, 16), עם (vv. 5, 14), נחלה (vv. 5, 14), בין (vv. 7, 8), יה (vv. 7, 12), יצר (vv. 9, 20), רעע (vv. 13, 16). In many of these instances, it is not only the word that is repeated, but the thought associated with it. For example, vv. 2 and 23 both contain שׁוב (and על) as well as other words that are semantically close (גמול, אונם and רעתם). The final verse provides a positive answer to the plea at the opening of the psalm, and together the pair form an inclusion.[154]

As well as being used for the morning service on Thursday, the psalm was also recited during the Feast of Tabernacles, with vv. 16–23 used on the third day and vv. 8–15 on the fourth (*b. Sukkah* 55a).

The psalm opens in a typical manner with an invocation of the deity, presented as an appeal for a theophany (vv. 1–2). The invocation is closely related to the rest of the psalm. It is both an

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[153] The division used here is followed by many commentators. See, for instance, Martino Conti, "Dio difensore della causa degli oppressi secondo il Salmo 94," *Anton* 72 (1997): 3–37. Pierre Auffret has performed two detailed analyses of the structure of the psalm, which differ slightly from the one accepted here with regard to the blocking of the verses; see Auffret, "Essai sur la structure litteraire du Psaume 94," *BN* 24 (1984): 44–72; idem, "Qui se lèvera pour moi?: Étude structurelle de Psaume 94," *RivB* 46 (1998): 129–56.

[154] On the unity of the psalm, see de Meyer, "Sagesse Psalmique," 29–30; also Howard, *Structure*, 50–51; Auffret, "Qui se lèvera," 145–49.

introduction to and summation of what follows. In its characterization of Yahweh as judge/ruler (שׁפט) and agent of retribution, it circumscribes the horizons within which the assurances and appeals of the following verses operate. The repetition of the unusual epithet "God of vengeance" in v. 1 underscores the intensity with which the need for retributive action is felt, and the nature of the theophany requested in v. 2, in which Yahweh is urged not merely to appear passively but to rear up in action, brings out the urgency of the situation. There is irony in the appeal in v. 2, as Yahweh is called on to ascend (נשׂא) over (על) those who themselves already appear high (גאה). This verse also places the plea in a judicial context, by calling on Yahweh as judge/ruler. This perspective reappears at other points in the psalm (vv. 15, 20, 21). Divine retribution in Psalm 94 is situated in a legal context.[155]

The invocation is then followed by a section which explains the reason for the request (vv. 3–7). This opens with a question that identifies the arrogant as evil-doers who, as the repetition of עד־מתי in v. 3 suggests, have been unchecked for too long. Their crimes are outlined in vv. 4–7. These four verses form a chiasm: the first two verses state in general terms the irreligious behavior of the guilty, while the second two particularize. The evil-doers blaspheme against Yahweh (v. 4), and, in particular, deny Yahweh's interest in worldly events (v. 7). By their actions they oppress God's people (v. 5), and, in particular, reverse in the most extreme way the traditional commands to protect the weakest members of society (v. 6, cf. Ps 82:2–4).

To what extent should the descriptions of injustice found here and elsewhere in the psalm be taken as reflecting the reality of the performers? They conjure up images of total oppression and wholesale slaughter. While such times might have occurred, they hardly would have been the norm. Certainly they were not present during the whole of the late Second Temple period, when Psalm 94 was sung on a weekly basis. Further, psalms of lament are notorious for their exaggeration of the situation of distress. Thus it is more reasonable to see in the psalm not a situation of total oppression, but rather

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[155] Wayne T. Pitard, "Amarna *ekemu* and Hebrew *naqam**," *Maarav* 3 (1982): 18–9. Pitard argues against George E. Mendenhall's position that נקם indicates "vengeance" carried out by the divinity as an executive action, outside the judicial context; see Mendenhall, *The Tenth Generation: The Origins of the Biblical Tradition* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 70–104.

the expression of discontent with some significant aspects of the sociopolitical order.

What might these aspects be? This is an empty question! The psalm might have been sung with different situations in mind at different times. The identification of the situation and of the culprits would vary. This caution remains even if the context is restricted to that period when the psalm was used in the morning service. However, for that period one might hazard a few observations.

It is customary for commentators on this psalm to attempt to identify the "wicked." Usually a dichotomy is set up, in which one must choose between the alternatives of foreign overlords or corrupt indigenous officials.[156] In the late Second Temple period, such a dichotomy is overly simplistic. The power to oppress was held at various times by diverse groups – hostile foreigners, hellenized Jews, reforming Jews, sympathetic foreigners and scornful foreigners. Consider for instance the different attitudes of the Seleucids, Onias, the Maccabean rulers, Herod the Great, Pompey and Pilate. Any of these might be regarded as "arrogant" by some faction. However, since the psalm was sung regularly at a worship service controlled by the central religious faction, it may be less likely that, for this group at least, the psalm was interpreted with indigenous Jewish leaders (in other words, their colleagues) in its sights. Or, to revert to the dichotomy criticized before, it seems more likely that, when sung in the Jerusalem Temple, the psalm invoked retribution in a more or less veiled way upon the foreigners who for most of the late Second Temple period exercised considerable influence over Judea.[157]

In the following verses, the lament form breaks off and the psalm takes a sermonic turn. The sapiential elements of vv. 8–15 have been noted often and will not be discussed here.[158] Who is being addressed in the opening verses of this section (vv. 8–11 at least)? The matter is complicated. The implied audience may be the evil-doers, who

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[156] Anderson, *Psalms*, 2:670; Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 243; Alphonse Maillot, "La Justice contre la Justice?," *BVC* 79 (1968): 54–57; Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 1:227; Sarna, *Songs of the Heart*, 202; Fritz Stolz, *Psalmen in nachkultischen Raum* (ThStud 129; Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1983), 44.

[157] Cf. Sigmund Mowinckel, "Psalm Criticism Between 1900 and 1935," *VT* 5 (1955): 29–30. Mowinckel is concerned with the use of the psalm in an earlier period.

[158] See n. 149.

are castigated for their wicked behavior.[159] Alternatively, the use of the term עם, people, allows for the possibility that members of Israel are being reprimanded for their lack of faith in v. 8, although the harshness of the language speaks against this option.[160] However, the implied audience of the speech in the psalm need not be the one whom the speaker wished to address. How likely is it that any actual listener to the psalm would self-identify with the wicked or the foolish? These are not categories that a person would, under normal circumstances, admit to belonging to. Further, there is no supporting rhetoric that would lead a listener in any cultic setting to the realization that they were the ones being attacked. Instead these verses are better seen as words of consolation to the faithful community. The insults of v. 8 would capture the animosity toward the oppressors felt by those who identify themselves as righteous, and the following verses would assure them that God does indeed pay heed and will act against the wicked. Similar assurances, this time expressed positively, appear in vv. 13–15. The central verses of this section also console the righteous. The success of the wicked is trivialized in v. 11, while v. 12 holds out to the righteous something better than human ways (מחשׁות־אדם), namely the Torah of God, which leads to peace of mind in the face of oppression and knowledge of the certainty of retribution (vv. 13–14).

In interpreting the psalm, the central section must not be isolated from the surrounding laments.[161] The preceding lament has, in a sense, "set the scene" for the paranesis by introducing the wicked and their behavior. After this introduction, the psalmist is able to attack the wicked as straw men, and then pivot to speak directly to his real audience. In the context of the surrounding laments, vv.

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[159] Kraus, for example, sees the psalmist as trying to educate the wicked in vv. 8–11 (*Psalms 60–150*, 243).

[160] Gerstenberger locates the psalm in "congregational worship" where one faction is being criticised by another (*Psalms 2*, 177–81). The vitriole of the psalm would have led to a very lively assembly, but one wonders whether, if this was the psalm's setting, the term "worship" would be apposite. Although the use of the psalm on occasion in a conflictual congregational meeting is not inconceivable, it is hard to imagine this intensity persisting in the same community over decades or centuries. More likely, the community would split (as the Qumran covenanters did from the Jerusalem congregation) or the psalm would lose force and become conventional.

[161] See the discussion of the form and unity of the psalm above.

8–15 function not as sapiential teaching but as words of encouragement and consolation.

The translation of v. 13 warrants comment. There are several possible ways to interpret this verse.[162] Although a choice has to be made for the purposes of translation, it is wisest to recognize that a range of nuances is present in this verse, and that any or all of them may have been stirred by the psalm in the mind of the ancient listener. In other words, the verse may have a plurality of meanings. It may refer to the one who has been taught by the Lord (for example, the speaker of these verses and vv. 17–19) and who has serenity during and from the troubled times described in the psalm, and, at the same time, the verse may also attempt to comfort others by pointing them towards the teaching of the Lord (for instance, concerning God's unfailing retribution, v. 1, and reliability, v. 14).

The translation of the rhetorical question in v. 20 that begins the next section is uncertain, but its intent is not.[163] Although the guilty possess some form of temporal power, this is not divinely ordained. Both vv. 20 and 21 look back to the previous lament (vv. 2–7). The joyful triumph of the guilty in v. 3 now is expressed as their occupation of a seat of power; their criminal behavior as the taking of innocent lives. The psalmist does not dwell on these points, but quickly returns to words of encouragement framed as personal experience using stock metaphors for Yahweh's protection.[164]

The psalm closes with a triple assurance that retribution will come to the wrongdoers. At this point, the psalm slips back into a communal perspective (אלהינו). The last verse forms an inclusion with v. 2; just as the guilty have brought destruction on others (vv. 5, 6, 21), so the destruction requested in v. 2 will be wreaked on them.

The dominant theme in the psalm is that of retribution. A call for retribution is made explicitly at the start of the psalm and is answered at the end. The concept underlies the different sections of the psalm: the cries in vv. 3–7 presume that guilt will be punished;

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[162] See the comment on v. 13.

[163] On the history of interpretation of this verse, see Arthure Allgeier, "Psalm 93 (94), 20: Ein auslegungs- und bedeutunggeschichtlicher Beitrag," in *Festschrift Alfred Bertholet zum 80. Geburtstag* (ed. Walter Baumgartner et al.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1950), 15–28.

[164] On משגב and עור as metaphors for the protective role of Yahweh, see Olofsson, *God is my Rock*, 35–45, 78–80.

the address in vv. 8–11 asserts that wickedness does not go unheeded, and that in vv. 12–15 comforts the righteous with the assurance that action will be taken; the personal reflection in vv. 16–19 offers past proof of retributive action that benefited the speaker; and the next verses (vv. 20–23) argue from the very nature of God that evil will be rejected and the righteous protected.

Retribution in this psalm goes hand in hand with the motif of the division of humanity into two classes, the wicked and the righteous. The righteous belong to Yahweh (v. 12–15). The wicked persecute the righteous (vv. 5–7, 21) and reject Yahweh (v. 7). Yet retribution, carried out by Yahweh, is certain (v. 23), and the outcome is envisaged in terms of a reversal of fortune. Those who have behaved badly will experience themselves what they have done to others (vv. 2, 23a) and this will lead to their destruction (v. 23bc), just as they destroyed others (vv. 5, 6).[165] On the other hand, the motif of reversal of fortune does not apply as fully to the righteous. What they are promised is removal of persecution in the future and comfort in the present circumstances that comes from this confidence (vv. 13–20).

Other motifs support the theme. Yahweh is the ruler of the earth (vv. 2, 10, 12, 20) and has an active interest in human affairs (vv. 7, 8–11, 14, 17–19). Indeed, God has a stake in the world (note the possessives in vv. 5, 14) and Yahweh may be relied on to come to its aid (vv. 16–19, 22). Improper behavior is epitomized by the oppression of the unprotected (vv. 6), while correct behavior is trust in Yahweh and reception of the Torah (vv. 12–13). Wickedness is associated with lack of wisdom and righteousness with its possession (v. 8, 12). The present situation of each class of people is presented in stereotypical ways (exultation, oppression), as is their predicted situation in the future (destruction, security) and their behavior (violence and blasphemy, serenity and study). There is also the motif of personal testimony of trust (vv. 16–19, 22).

The most prominent aspect of the characterization of Yahweh in the psalm is the consistent depiction of activity. Almost every

[165] The fate of the wicked is equal to their actions, not an amplification of them, cf. Gen 4:24. Sirach 28:1–12 cautions against personal vindictiveness, suggesting that it be left to the Lord, cf. Heb 10:30. According to Eric L. Friedland, the later rabbis rejected calls for vengeance; see Friedland, "O God of Vengeance, Appear!," *Judaism* 37 (1988): 73–80. The psalm allows for a quietism appropriate for the politically sensitive climate of Jerusalem.

reference to Yahweh is one of activity. Yahweh rises, plants, heeds, sees, instructs, supports, destroys, and more.[166] Why is this? The answer lies in the nature of the concept of retribution.

Retribution is not a principle but an activity. Its promise is negated not by logic but by the ongoing presence of unrequited behavior. In the psalm Yahweh is characterized as the guarantor of retribution (v. 1), that is, as the one who acts to enforce the ordering of the universe. Thus it is important to show God in action. Retribution is made more certain by the assurance that God is not idle. In a more obvious way, the personal testimony of the voice to God's past retributive acts also encourages trust in the future performance of the God of retribution.

The psalm also characterizes Yahweh as the ruler of the earth, taking the term in a broad sense to include notions of justice, wisdom (vv. 11, 7, 9), and the creation and instruction of humanity. God has a special relationship with a group of people, described in terms of possession (vv. 5, 14, 23). As a result of that relationship, God teaches those people, is faithful to that relationship, and may be relied on to protect that group and destroy those who threaten them either individually or corporately. However, it would appear from the situation described in the psalm that God is currently inactive, that is, God is not acting to protect that group at the present time. Hence the need arises to stress the activity of God.

Humanity is divided into two groups in the psalm – the people who belong to Yahweh (עמו, נחלתו, עדק, צדיק, כל־ישרי־לב, נקי, "those taught by Yahweh," vv. 5, 12, 14, 15, 21) and the people who reject Yahweh (גאים, רשעים, פעלי און, בערים, כסילים, רעים, vv. 2, 3, 4, 8, 13, 16).[167] The first group is passive in the psalm. They do not appear as the subject of any verb. They suffer persecution at the hands of the wicked, but are also promised instruction, comfort and

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[166] Activity is associated with Yahweh in vv. 1, 2, 7, 9–14, 17–19, 22, 23. By contrast, God appears, but is not active in vv. 5, 15, 20. Verses 3, 4, 6, 8, 16, 21 do not refer to Yahweh.

[167] The terms for each group are repeated and/or linked through parallelism in the psalm. Verse 6 also introduces three other types (יתומים, גר, עלמנה) who suffer persecution, but who do not appear elsewhere in the psalm. An injunction to protect such people is common in the Bible and its breach is a recurring motif associated with unrighteousness (e.g., Exod 22:20–23; Is 1:23). This stereotypical usage indicates that the verse is primarily an illustration of the utter depravity of the wicked and only secondarily an extension of the group who belong to Yahweh.

protection from Yahweh. The wicked, on the other hand, ruthlessly pursue a course of arrogance, blasphemy, oppression and murder. In turn, however, they will become objects of destruction in the future (vv. 13, 16, 23).

The speaking voice of the psalm maintains the same identity throughout, although the addressee alternates between Yahweh and the people. The personal testimony of vv. 16–19, 22 reveals the voice to be one of those who belong to Yahweh, who receive protection from God. This identification is confirmed by the plural suffix (אלהינו) in the closing verse.

No role is played by inanimate agents.

5. *Psalm 81*

1. For the "Director," according to the "Gittith," of Asaph.
2. Shout for joy to God, our strength,
   Cheer for the God of Jacob.
3. Raise a tune and beat the hand-drum,
   [play] the sweet lyre and the harp.
4. Blow the shofar at the new moon,
   at the full moon for the day of the festival.
5. For this is a commandment for Israel,
   a ruling of the God of Jacob.
6. He set it as a reminder for Joseph
   when he went out against the land of Egypt.

   I hear an oracle I have not [yet] accepted:
7. I turned his shoulder from the burden,
   his hands left the basket.
8. In distress you cried out and I rescued you,
   I answered you in a thundercloud.
   I tested you at the waters of Meribah. *Selah*
9. Pay attention, my people, while I take you to task
   – Oh Israel, if you would only pay attention to me! –
10. There should be no alien god among you
    and you should not worship a foreign god.
11. I am Yahweh, your God,
    the one who brought you up from the land of Egypt.
    Open your mouth and I will fill it.

12. But my people would not pay attention to my voice
    and Israel did not accede to me.
13. So I let him go in the stubbornness of their hearts,
    they followed their own ideas.
14. Oh that my people would pay attention to me,
    that Israel would follow my ways.
15. Then I would quickly subdue their enemies,
    and turn my force against their foes.
16. Those who hate Yahweh would fall before him,
    and their time would be eternal.
17. Then I would feed them with the finest of the wheat,
    and satisfy you with honey from the Rock.

v. 1: Some LXX families include πέμπτη σαββάτου in the superscription, see ch. 2.5.

Director, Gittith: The terms למנצח and הגתית are obscure; for these and other technical terms in the superscriptions, see Susan E. Gillingham, *The Poems and Psalms of the Hebrew Bible* (OBS; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 245–51; Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (2 vols. in one; trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), 2:206–17. The LXX and some versions add "a psalm."

vv. 3–4: The instruments and their approximate equivalents in the European musical traditions (hand-drum ~ תף, small lyre ~ כנור, harp ~ נבל) are described and depicted in John H. Eaton, "Music's Place in Worship: A Contribution From the Psalms," in *Prophets, Worship and Theodicy: Studies in Prophetism, Biblical Theology and Structural and Rhetorical Analysis and on the Place of Music in Worship: Papers Read at the Joint British-Dutch Old Testament Conference Held at Woudschoten, 1982* (ed. J. Barton and R. Carroll; *OtSt*; Leiden: Brill, 1984), 87–92; see also Alfred Sendrey, *Music in Ancient Israel* (London: Vision, 1969), 266–421; Ivor H. Jones, "Music and Musical Instruments: Musical Instruments," *ABD* 4:934–39; Joachim Braun, *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine: Archaeological, Written and Comparative Sources* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2001), 8–32. The shofar in v. 4 was the horn of a wild goat or ram.

v. 4: *festival:* "Festivals" in the Targums, Syriac and many manuscripts.

v. 5: *for Israel . . . of God*: The poet playfully uses two senses of the preposition ל in this verse.

v. 6: *against*: The LXX has "from the land of Egypt."

I hear . . .: The line is obscure. Its translation is discussed below. For a list of alternatives; see, e.g., Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 319–20.

v. 7: LXX has "he turned."

vv. 7–8: *he . . . you*: The discontinuities in personal pronoun in the MT in this verse and elsewhere which are removed by the LXX (and modern translations) do not effect the understanding of the psalm, and might

just as easily be let stand in translation. As Adele Berlin has noted, such discontinuities are common in Hebrew poetry and do not require emendation; see Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 40–41; idem, "Grammatical Aspects of Biblical Parallelism," *HUCA* 50 (1979): 30–35.

v. 8: *thundercloud*: "a garment of thunder," see *HALOT*, סתר.

take to task: Or "warn," "rebuke" (עוד). The idea of instruction better suits the thought of v. 10 and the context of the giving of commandments (cf. עדות). In the psalm, Yahweh does not warn the people of impending disaster or actively rebuke them, but instead God rescues them, instructs them, lets them go their own way and conditionally promises aid. See B. Couroyer, "Un Égyptianisme dans Ben Sira IV, 11," *RB* 8 (1974): 206–17.

v. 15: *turn my force*: "turn my hand."

v. 16: The verse, especially the second line, is obscure. Some versions read חתם, their terror, for עתם, their time; see Raymond J. Tournay, *Seeing and Hearing God with the Psalms: The Prophetic Liturgy of the Second Temple in Jerusalem* (trans. J. Edward Crowley; JSOTSup 118; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 165. In meaning, v. 16 parallels v. 15.

v. 17: *rock:* The word, צור, has divine associations often associated with Yahweh's protection (cf. Ps 92:16) or the place where Yahweh is revealed; in the LXX it is often (although not here, but cf. Ps 92:16) translated θεός; see Staffan Olofsson, *God is my Rock: A Study of Translation Technique and Theological Exegesis in the Septuagint* (ConBOT 31; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1990), 35–45, 155. A weak inclusion between vv. 2 and 17 is formed by צור and עז. Yitzhak Avishur, noting a connection with Ugaritic usage, reads חלב as "hill"; see Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs in Biblical and Ancient Semitic Languages* (AOAT 210; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1984), 431. This can also provide another allusion to the place of Yahweh, i.e., to Mt. Zion. Thus the verse might promise the finest of the hill, Zion, the honey of paradise.

This is the second of the Daily Psalms to be identified as a psalm of Asaph.[168] It may be divided into two blocks: a hymnic call to praise (vv 2–6b) followed by a monitorial speech from God (6c–17), which itself can be partitioned into two – a remembrance of the

[168] See n. 80. A northern origin is often posited for the psalm. The name Joseph in v. 6 is sometimes taken as an indicator of this; see, e.g., Hermann Gunkel, *Die Psalmen* (HKAT 2/2/4; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1926), 357, 359; Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 2:72, esp. n. 56; but this is disputed by others, e.g., Scott C. Layton, "Jehoseph in Ps 81:6," *Bib* 69 (1988): 406–11. The linguistic argument for a northern origin is pursued more fully in Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, 73–81. Nasuti argues for the presence of "Ephraimitic" traditions (*Tradition History*, 102–8).

past (7–11b) and a call to obedience (12–17).[169] In view of its admonitory and liturgical nature, its genre might be described as "prophetic liturgy" or even a "sermon."[170]

In its detail, the psalm is complex. It exhibits a strong and coherent development of thought. In the first section of the poem, the poet skillfully moves from a typical call to praise to a recollection of the covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel. This recollection is developed in the second section, and forms the basis for the final plea for obedience.

The first section uses typical hymnic language. The psalm opens with a call for the people to praise God with their voices (v. 2). The call for audible praise is widened to include the sounding of musical instruments used in worship celebrations (v. 3). A narrowing then occurs, as the particular case of the shofar is introduced (v. 4). The shofar, however, was not usually considered a musical instrument, although it is sometimes classed as such (Ps 98:6; 150:3). Its customary role was that of announcing important occasions. It was used to assemble Israel for battle (Judg 6:34; 1 Sam 13:3), to announce the start of the new moon, and ritually in the course of festivals such as the Tamid itself, but notably at ceremonies associated with the covenant (e.g., 2 Chr 15:14; 1 Kgs 1:39). By introducing the shofar with the musical instruments, the poet is then able to slip smoothly to its other associations, the new moon, festivals (v. 4), covenant occasions (v. 5) and warfare (v.6).

The interpretation of v. 4 is clouded by two linked points of uncertainty, the rare word כסה (כסא), and the identification of חג.[171] The context of the verse suggests that כסה refers first to some part of the monthly cycle (from the parallelism with חדשׁ) and second to a day on which a great festival (חג) occurred, announced by the shofar. In a Jewish tradition כסה is interpreted as a synonym for חדשׁ, since the new moon was announced by a shofar blast, but not so the great festivals.[172] However, many modern commentators opt for a refer-

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[169] The fine structure of the psalm is more complex. See Pierre Auffret, " 'Ecoute, mon peuple!': Étude structurelle du Psaume 81," *SJOT* 7 (1993): 285–302.

[170] It shares these qualities with Ps 50 and 95; see Gerstenberger, *Psalms 1*, 210; idem, *Psalms 2*, 111–12; Gunkel, *Introduction*, 60; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 321.

[171] כסה is found only here and in Prov 7:20.

[172] Solomon B. Freehof, "Sound the Shofar, 'ba-kesse,' Psalm 81:4," *JQR* 64 (1974): 225–28; Benjamin Kedar-Kopfstein, "Glossen zur traditionellen biblischen Philologie," *ZAH* 2 (1989): 208–9.

ence to the full moon, the time at which the major festivals of Passover and Sukkoth began.[173] Etymology can be pressed into the service of either side.[174] An allusion to a great festival is more likely, since this preserves the force of חג, while also allowing that the shofar be sounded, if not to announce the festival, then *during* the celebrations, as it was at the Tamid service.[175] Thus the reference to a full moon is preferred.

Identification of the festival in question is more problematic. The New Year festival complex is frequently preferred, since this was preceded by the Day of Trumpets and thought to include some covenant renewal ceremony.[176] Later Jewish traditions associated the performance of this psalm with the Day of Trumpets and the Feast of Tabernacles or Sukkot (*b. Rosh Hash.* 30b; *b. Sukkah* 55a). On the other hand, Weinfeld has argued that the Feast of Weeks (Shabuoth) included a celebration of the giving of the Torah and the renewal of the covenant and so he associates the unnamed חג in Ps 81:4 with this festival.[177]

From a literary point of view, the identification of the festival is of minor importance. Indeed, it may be that the psalm is intentionally indeterminate on this point. The thrust of the psalm moves not towards precise identification of a festival, but towards the creation of a festival mood. References to singing, music and festival occasions are heaped upon one another in order to reinforce in the minds of the listeners the impression that they are in the presence of God for some great encounter, like that of the primal encounter

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[173] Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 317; Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 146.

[174] כסה might be derived from the verb *ksh*, "to cover, hide" since the new moon is hidden from view, or related to an Akkadian word for the full moon with cognates in Phoenician and Syriac; see *HALOT*, כסא and כסה.

[175] On the sounding of the shofar during certain festivals, see Moshe Weinfeld, "The Decalogue: Its Significance, Uniqueness, and Place in Israel's Tradition," in *Religion and Law: Biblical-Judaic and Islamic Perspectives* (ed. Edwin B. Firmage, Bernard G. Weiss and John W. Welch; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 38–42. This essay is duplicated in large measure in idem, "The Uniqueness of the Decalogue and its Place in Jewish Tradition," in *Ten Commandments in History and Tradition* (ed. B. Segal; English version ed. Gershon Levi; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1990), 1–44.

[176] Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 1:95, 122, 124, 156–60, 2:112. He is followed by many other commentators. In *Midrash Tehillim* the feast is identified as New Year's Day; see William G. Braude, trans., *The Midrash on the Psalms* (2 vols.; YJS 13; New Haven: Yale University, 1959), 56. On the other hand, the term שופר is not used in Num 29:1 and according to Num 10:10 it is the silver trumpets, חצצרה, that are played on the Day of Trumpets.

[177] Weinfeld, "Decalogue in Israel's Tradition," 31–32, 39–47.

at Sinai (vv. 5–7). This anticipatory ambience reinforces the quasi-theophany of the second section of the psalm and undergirds its message of obedience. The psalm might be used at any great festival, or equally at any other time when a call to faith is suitable.[178]

The rationale for the call to praise is introduced in v. 5 and marked in typical fashion by the conjunction כי.[179] It is a ritual legislated by God for Israel. There is a niggling indeterminacy in the verse. What precisely has been commanded – a festival, praise in general, or something else? In this regard, the combination of חק and משפט bears some consideration. These two only appear together in the singular in four other places.[180] In 1 Sam 30:25 they clearly refer to a single law promulgated by David concerning the division of booty. In the others, their scope is somewhat wider. Teaching the חק ומשפט was the vocation of Ezra (Ezra 7:10). When Joshua brokered a covenant between Israel and God (Josh 24:19–28), he is described as making a חק ומשפט and then writing the words of the law in a book (Josh 24:25). Finally the pair occurs in the story of the testing at Marah (Exod 15:23–26). After sweetening the water, the people are given a חק ומשפט, tested and then commanded to obey God.[181] So there is present in Ps 81:5 an undertone of a summons to obedience to the whole Torah, a connotation that is more fully developed in the second part of the psalm. The verse has an anticipatory as well as an explanatory force.

Mention of the Torah leads to allusions in v. 6ab to the circumstances surrounding its receipt. Ambiguity in antecedent is present in v. 6b. The one who "went out" might be Joseph as an individual, Joseph as the nation, or God.[182] The first option is the least likely, as the allusions to the Exodus story in the following verses encourage a similar line of interpretation here.[183] The preposition על

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[178] The variant plural reading חגינו supports this non-specific interpretation.

[179] Gunkel claims there are over 100 examples of כי used in this way (*Introduction*, 29–30).

[180] Norbert Lohfink, "Noch einmal *hōq ûmišpāt* (zu Ps 81,5f)," *Bib* 73 (1992): 253–54.

[181] Exod 15:25b–26 and Ps 81 overlap in vocabulary (שמע, קל, חק, משפט) and thought (testing, obedience, Egypt). However, there are dissimilarities – Exod 15:26 uses a wider vocabulary and offers a stick rather than a carrot to induce obedience. The two passages may be accessing a common rhetorical pool, rather than being related in direct dependence.

[182] On the various options; see Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 319.

[183] P. A. H. de Boer has argued that the reference is to Joseph's rise to power

in v. 6b presents a problem for translation. The LXX and others interpret this as "from," so that the clause refers to the departure of Israel from Egypt. This is rather forced, but coheres well with the customary Exodus story (see v. 11). A more natural way to read the על would be as "against," with God as the agent who went out. This interpretation casts God in a more aggressive role in the campaign against Egypt than is found in the Book of Exodus, but is supported by v. 15, where על again appears. Just as God acted against Egypt, so God can act against Israel's contemporary enemies.

A change occurs in the psalm at v. 6c. The subject matter swings from a call to praise to a summons to obedience and the tone becomes darker as the voice of God is presented to the congregation. Continuity is preserved however, in that the following verses are constructed out of elements from the Exodus traditions which were introduced in vv. 4–6ab. In particular, v. 6c picks up the experience of hearing the voice of God (Exod 20:18–20, cf. 15:26).

The interpretation of v. 6c presents some problems. The difficulty is rooted in the interpretation of שפט and ידע, both of which have wide semantic ranges. One can, however, proceed by making use of the connections between v. 6c and the surrounding material in the psalm.[184] The preceding verses established a festival scenario and hinted at communication with God (v. 5). Next, v. 6c introduces a message from God, delivered during the course of the celebrations via a prophet or other religious functionary. The verses that follow contain an oracle. If one stays within the purview of the psalm, it

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in Egypt and sees the psalm as expressing anti-Judean tendencies. His case is based in part on the spelling of Joseph as יהוסף. On the other hand, according to Layton, this spelling of Joseph was popular in the late Second Temple period, and no "special interpretative significance" can be attached to it. Kraus argues that Joseph was a term used in psalms to name Israel in Egypt, cf. Ps 77:15; 78:67; 80:1; 105:17. Earle Hilgert points out that whereas Joseph appears in a positive light in Genesis, his portrayal in non-biblical literature is more negative. This ambiguous portrayal is in line with the attitude of the psalm to the behavior of God's people. See P. A. H. de Boer, "Psalm 81:6a: Observations on Translation and Meaning of One Hebrew Line," in *In the Shelter of Elyon: Essays on Ancient Palestinian Life and Literature in Honor of G. W. Ahlström* (ed. W. Boyd Barrick, John R. Spencer and G. Ahlstrom; JSOTSup 31; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 72–74, 77; Earle Hilgert, "The Dual Image of Joseph in Hebrew and Early Jewish Literature," *BR* 30 (1985): 5–21; Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 150; Layton, "Jehoseph."

[184] Others go outside the text to find the referent for the verse, e.g., Tournay sees the "new and unknown language" as being the (old and familiar) covenant (*Seeing and Hearing*, 175).

seems natural to equate the message (שפט) with the oracle. If this message is what is reported in the following verses, then the words or language are clearly not unknown or unintelligible. Thus the force of ידע must lie other than in linguistic or intellectual knowledge. The oracle that follows is admonitory. It is a plea to the people to return to an uncontaminated form of worship of Yahweh, a plea introduced by historical reminiscences of protection and failure, and encouraged by the promise of security. It has an emotive appeal. Hence ידע has a volitional force ("acknowledge with the will"), and v. 6c could be translated "I hear a message I have not (yet) taken to heart." Although spoken by a prophet, it could have a collective sense and represent a "confession" of the people.[185] This analysis can be extended through a consideration of the verb שמע. The verb appears five times in the psalm, in vv. 6, 9 (twice), 12 and 14. In its occurrences other than in v. 6, it carries a meaning far greater than that of mere stimulation of the auditory nerves ("to hear"). The verb שמע in the psalm indicates a commitment on the part of the hearer to adopt the advice given. It is tempting to see this meaning as flowing into v. 6 as well. Not only is v. 6c a confession of past failure, but in the light of the whole psalm it becomes a profession of the commitment to do better in the future.[186]

In vv. 7–11 elements from the story of the Exodus are introduced. The treatment is idiosyncratic. The elements are recognizable as drawn from the Exodus story, but they do not quite match anything found in Exodus or elsewhere. This has led commentators to conjecture that the psalmist is drawing on a different tradition from the one preserved in the Hebrew Bible.[187] Alternatively, one might see the poet as freely improvising upon the primary traditions, but modifying them to make the traditional experience fresh to the congregation. The variation allows for a reliving of the past, but with the potential for a different outcome. By drawing on the old traditions, the atmosphere of encounter with God and the call to obedience is invoked once more; by altering the traditions, the possibility of a different decision, for obedience, is opened.

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[185] Similarly Michael D. Goulder, *The Psalms of the Sons of Korah* (JSOTSup 20; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1982), 111.

[186] The power of v. 6c to induce a feeling of renewal of commitment would increase with regular repetition of the psalm, as in the cycle of the daily service.

[187] Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 1:117 (citing Bentzen), 160; Samuel E. Loewenstamm, "The Bearing of Psalm 81 upon the Problem of the Exodus," *ErIsr* 5 (1958): 80–82.

The oracle opens with a recollection of the period of servitude and the relief provided by God. Nouns derived from the root סבל, which is used in v. 7, appear frequently in the context of forced labor in Exodus and elsewhere.[188] However, דוד is not found in this context.[189] The opening sentiment of v. 8 is almost a cliche in psalms, although, since distress (צרה) is often attributed to idolatry, it is possible to see its use here as anticipating the commandment and complaint in vv. 10–14.[190] As it unfolds, this verse becomes particularized to the Exodus story, with the allusion to a theophany in v. 8b and the specific reference to Meribah in v. 8c. Both of these clauses raise questions. Which theophany is intended? The motif of deliverance might suggest the theophany at the Red Sea, which would also be in keeping with a chronological ordering of the references in vv. 7–10, but the later focus on the commandment calls to mind the theophany at Mt. Sinai. The mention of testing at Meribah in v. 8c appears in a form found nowhere else. Meribah is a location associated with failure on the part of Israel, usually expressed as disobedience. In the Pentateuchal tradition, it is the people who test God at this place (Exod 17:7, using נסה, cf. Deut 6:16).[191] In Ps 81 this tradition is reversed, with God testing the nation at Meribah.

Having moved quickly through the earlier events of the Exodus story, the psalm slows in vv. 9–10 to concentrate on a recollection of the giving of the Torah. Verse 9 introduces the announcement with the familiar cry of שמע.[192] Instruction or warning (עוד) is often

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[188] In relation to the Egyptian experience, סבל in Is 10:27, cf. 9:3; 14:25; סבלות in Exod 1:1; 2:11; 5:4, 5; 6:6, 7; in relation to Solomon, סבל in 1 Kgs 5:29 (ET 5:15); 11:28; 2 Chr 2:1, 17 (ET 2:2, 18). Other meanings occur in 2 Chr 34:13 and Neh 4:4, 11. The verbal root denotes carrying a burden.

[189] The word means either a basket, 2 Kgs 10:27 (of heads); Jer 24:1, 2 (of figs); or a cookpot (1 Sam 2:14); Job 41:12 (ET 41:20); 2 Chr 35:13. The "fleshpot" of Exod 16:3 is סיר הבשר.

[190] On the trope of crying to God in distress, see Ps 20:2; 50:15; 86:7; 91:15; 120:1 for occurrences of some or all of צרה, חלץ, קרא, and ענן in close proximity. On צרה and idolatry, see Deut 31:17, 21; Judg 10:14; 1 Sam 10:19; Is 8:22, 32:6; Jer 14:8.

[191] Three locations are associated with testing in the Exodus story, Meribah, Massah and Marah. Meribah is a place of disobedience in Num 20:13, 24; Deut 32:51; Ps 95:8; 106:32 and a geographical boundary in Ezek 47:19; 48:28. It is often paired with Massah (which stands alone at Deut 6:16; 9:22). People are tested at Massah and Meribah (Deut 33:8) and at Marah (Exod 15:25, again using נסה). Marah is listed as one of the stations in Num 33:8, 9.

[192] Cf. Ps 50:7, Exod 15:26, Jer 11:1, 6, 7. It does not seem likely that v. 9 is a deliberate allusion to Deut 6:4, since only one word is in common, contra Weinfeld,

associated with law-giving.[193] The language and expression in this verse and those that follow is remarkably similar to that found in Jeremiah, especially Jer 11:1–8.[194] The commandment in v. 10 is recognizable as a variant of the first of the ten commandments (cf. Exod 20:3, 5), although the language is unusual.[195] The similarity is reinforced by the parallel between the self-representation formula in v. 11ab and Exod 20:2.[196] The first commandment here functions as a synecdoche for the others, and indeed for the whole Torah and covenant relationship.

Many commentators have observed that the development of the oracle is broken by v. 11c. Various ways of rectifying this have been proposed. For example, it is sometimes suggested that v. 11c should follow v. 6c and be construed as the message delivered by the voice. The new compound is placed either after v. 6ab or v. 8.[197] Even if one such hypothetical reconstruction was accurate, the date at which the psalm was altered into its current form cannot be determined, and so the question of which form was used in the Tamid service is unanswerable. In the face of such uncertainty, it seems better to follow the course of accepting the ordering of the MT (and LXX).

In its current form, the ordering of v. 11 grants a peculiar status to its third member. In Exod 20, the self-identification of God preceded the commandments and established their authority. If one applies an analogous interpretive pattern in Psalm 81, then v. 11ab elevates the instruction to open the mouth to a status akin to that of the Decalogue. This instruction recalls the promise of Exod 3:8 (and elsewhere) and the provision of manna (Exod 16).[198]

"Decalogue in Israel's Tradition," 30. The word שמע is formulaic in Deuteronomy (cf. Deut 4:1; 5:1, 27; 27:9; 33:7).

[193] Weinfeld, "Decalogue in Israel's Tradition," 30–31.

[194] Nasuti, *Tradition History*, 106, compare also with Jer 7:21–24.

[195] The expression אל זר is rare (Ps 44:21; cf. Deut 32:16; Jer 2:25, 3:13), as is אל נכר (Deut 32:21; Mal 2:11). Combinations of אלהים and נכר (but not זר) are more frequent (Gen 35:2, 4; Josh 24:3, 20; Judg 10:16; 1 Sam 7:3; 2 Chr 33:15; Jer 5:19, cf. Deut 31:16; Dan 11:39).

[196] See J. Kenneth Kuntz, *The Self-Revelation of God* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967), 60–65, 68–69.

[197] For a summary, see Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 320.

[198] Kraus argues that v. 11c is metaphorical, referring to the words of prophecy put in the mouth of the prophet, and also conjoins this verse to v. 6c (*Psalms 60–150*, 150). This over-spiritualizes the concreteness of the promise of the psalm. The imagery in vv. 11c and 17 is of an abundance of food, which, if anything, symbolizes material prosperity. In like manner, vv. 14–16 portray the removal of

The first part of the oracle, vv. 7–11, concentrates on Yahweh's activity. It is for the most part neutral in its portrayal of the people's response to Yahweh. Certainly the reference to Meribah anticipates rejection, and the oath in v. 9b could be read as an expression of lament, but these inferences as yet lie dormant.[199] They come to life in the second part of the oracle, vv. 12–17, where disobedience is detailed, but the promise of support is maintained nonetheless.

Israel's renegade behavior is summarized in the opening two verses of the second part of the oracle, vv. 12–13. Israel does not listen (שמע); they spurn God; God spurns them; and they pursue their own ways (הלך). The behavior of the people in vv. 12–13 stands in contrast to that of God in vv. 7–11. God hears the cries of the people and acts; Israel, on the other hand, neither hears God nor acts appropriately. Verse 12 gives the immediate reaction of the people to the commandment and self-revelation of God found in v. 10–11,[200] and v. 13 its consequences for the relationship between the two parties.[201] God's desire for the restoration of the broken relationship is presented in v. 14. This verse is structured as an abbreviated reverse parallel to vv. 12–13: the references to rejection are absent (quite appropriate in the context), but the sequence: listen to God (שמע) and walk in God's ways (הלך), remains. In terms of the larger logic of the psalm, this verse is also a reprise of the plea in v. 9. The offer of salvation for obedience is still open, despite the intervening events outlined in vv. 12–13.

The closing three verses describe the results of such a restoration of the relationship. Underlying v. 15 is the axiom that rejection of God's commandments results in consequent misfortune. This verse reveals that the people are suffering some form of oppression. The

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external threats. Taken together, the offer is of an idyllic state of existence, conditional upon obedience (vv. 6c, 9–11).

[199] Thijs Booij argues that Ps 81:7–12 is an example of a tripartite pattern (reminder of deliverance from Egypt, commandment and complaint about disobedience) that is prophetic in origin; see de Booij, "The Background of the Oracle in Psalm 81," *Bib* 65 (1984): 465–75.

[200] Cf. שמע with קול in Ps 95:7; Deut 5:24; 21:18; Is 28:23.

[201] In all but two occurrences, שרירות appears in Jeremiah (Deut 29:18; Ps 81:13; Jer 3:17; 7:24; 9:13; 11:8; 13:10; 16:12; 18:12; 23:17). It always appears in conjunction with לב and usually with חלך close by. The parallel with Jer 7:24, in which מצציה also occurs, is particularly close. The Jeremian occurrences occur in contexts which deal with the cycle of apostasy, punishment and salvation; see E. Haglund, *Historical Motifs in the Psalms* (ConBOT 23; [Stockholm]: Gleerup, 1984), 17–18.

verse, however, takes a positive approach to the matter. If the people were to turn to God, the oppression would be removed. The phrase על צריהם recalls על־ארץ מצרים in v. 6, and this link then provides proof that God is able to act to rectify the current distress. Another such link arises from the use of words derived from צר in vv. 8 and 15. Through these links, the psalm also prepares the way for a cycle of praise and deliverance. The action against Egypt was part of the reason for the call to praise at the start of the psalm, to which the people responded. Obedience now would lead to a repetition of that action, against the current oppressors, and thereby give rise to a new reason to praise God, the bastion (עז, v. 2) in the present. In this regard, כנע is frequently used of the subjugation of enemies in the Land, but not of the Egyptians.[202] In Chronicles, the word also describes the humble state of the faithful.[203]

The thought of v. 15 is developed in the following, parallel verse. Accurate translation of v. 16 stumbles over the terms כחשׁ and עתם, but the sense of the verse is clear.[204] In vv. 15–16 there is a progression in the nature of the opponents of Israel. They start as enemies of Israel, a term which does not indicate the dominance of either party, only opposition. Then they become superior, as oppressors of Israel, and so, once the relationship between God and Israel has been restored, turn into haters of God (v. 16).[205] Such a status automatically guarantees their destruction, just as it did for the Egyptians (v. 6).

In v. 17, Israel is fed again. The verbal forms intimate both past and future. The vav-consecutive would usually be read as past, but the context of promise gives a future sense to the sentence.[206] This

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[202] Deut 9:3; Judg 3:30; 4:27; 8:28; 11:33; 1 Sam 7:13; 2 Sam 8:1; Neh 9:24; 1 Chr 17:10; 18:1; 20:4; 2 Chr 13:18; 28:19. Israel's enemies also subdue her: Ps 106:42; 107:12

[203] 2 Chr 7:14; 12:6, 7, 12; 30:11; 32:26; 33:23; 34:27; 36:11 (cf. 1 Kgs 21:29; 2 Kgs 22:19). With this nuance, v. 15 might recall passages where the nations come to serve Yahweh, e.g., Is 60:4–16.

[204] כחשׁ indicates subjection, with a hint of conversion to Yahwism; see John H. Eaton, "Some Questions of Philology and Exegesis in the Psalms," *JTS* ns 19 (1968): 607–8.

[205] The change in the suffix from Israel to God suggests a developing closeness in the relationship between the two parties stemming from the decision to follow the way of the Lord.

[206] Haglund suggests it indicates the fulfilment of the covenant by both parties (*Historical Motifs*, 18).

closing verse completes the thought of v. 11 weaving together the promise of a land flowing with milk and honey and the provision of essentials (water from the rock) in the wilderness (cf. Deut 32:13–14), with hints of God's protective presence in Mt. Zion.

Psalm 81 presents a cycle of praise and renewal. It starts with a typical call to praise which develops subtly into the anticipation of a theophany. From the theophany there issues an oracle which reiterates the foundations of the relationship between Israel and God, in respect of Yahweh's deliverance of Israel from Egypt, the divine desire for obedience (expressed in the offer of the Torah) and preparedness to support Israel. Interwoven with this is the thread of Israel's rejection and subsequent misfortune. The offer of support, however, remains open. If accepted anew, security and prosperity would follow and give rise to more cause for praise.

In this Tamid Psalm, the relationship between God and God's people is again in view. This time, the exposition is organized around the key concept of commitment (obedience, attentiveness, practical loyalty, שמע). The word שׁמע itself is applied five times to God's people (vv. 6, 9, 12, 14). The concept underlies the whole psalm. Worship is a form of attentiveness (vv. 2–4, 10, 13). The recollections of Exodus traditions portray the loyalty of God to Israel in the past (vv. 6, 7–8, 10–11, cf. Exod 2:24) and undergird the promise of such care in the future (vv. 11c, 15–17). The theme of the psalm may be described as the commitment that forms part of the relationship between God and God's people, presented as an appeal to Israel and as a contrast between Israel's present lack of obedience and Yahweh's loyalty and benevolence known in the past and anticipated in the future.

Three complexes of motifs serve the main theme. The first is that of worship. This appears in three ways. The psalm opens with worship concretized in human acts of praise (vv. 2–4). Later, there is the commandment against idolatry, or, expressed positively, to worship Yahweh alone (vv. 10–11). Finally, the practice of worship is concretized in the complaint that Israel's current worship practice is defective (vv. 12–13). It is both idolatrous and self-conceived. In all three motifs, worship is a requirement for Israel imposed on it from outside. There is a degree of inconsistency among the three forms. The first assumes that a tradition of worship of Yahweh is an accepted part of present practice. The second and third, however, imply that present worship of Yahweh is inadequate.

The second complex draws on the traditions of the history of Israel. These appear in the guise of allusions to Exodus. Several motifs are present. The use of the terms Jacob and Joseph allude to the presence of Israel in Egypt. There are the motifs of oppression in Egypt, deliverance from Egypt, theophany in Sinai, murmuring in the desert, divine providence in the wilderness and the giving of the Torah. All these motifs are touched on only lightly, suggesting that the historical allusions are subordinate to the theme of the psalm. They draw on the cultural background of the audience in order to create an atmosphere that will aid the acceptance of the call the worship.

The third major motif is retribution. The psalm presumes some threat to Israel in the present and holds out the promise that if the people reform, then firstly their enemies will be destroyed and secondly they will enjoy rich rewards. To some extent, these motifs interact with the other two complexes, in that the historical motifs of deliverance and providence underwrite the promise of retribution, and in that worship provides the means of identification of the people with Yahweh, so that the enemies of one become the enemies of the other.

All three complexes also point to an encounter with Yahweh, in the present in the cult, in the past in the Exodus, and in the future in the personal intimacy of feeding.[207]

In the psalm, the only property attributed directly to God is that of association with the people. This appears in several different forms, e.g., God of Jacob, my people, your God (vv. 2, 5, 11, 12, 14) and is in keeping with the emphasis on the relationship between God and people. In that relationship, God has authority, inasmuch as God may make commandments. In the past, God has been active in the care of Israel, as is witnessed by the recollections of the Exodus story. In the present, it does not appear that God is assisting Israel. Rather, God is pleading with them to worship him, but this plea is ignored. The future holds out the possibility of action by God again, against Israel's enemies and for the material benefit of Israel.

The prominent human agent in the psalm is the group Israel. It stands in a relationship to God in which the authority of God is

[207] The motif of divine encounter extends to Egypt and the current oppressors, in these cases, for destruction.

acknowledged and illustrated by reference to the past and the traditions of the Exodus. Worship of Yahweh by Israel is assumed. Despite all these things, Israel at present fails to obey the command to worship God properly. Israel is also threatened by external foes. The future for God's people is open. It may be a continuation of the present or a change for the better, if devotion is re-established.

Another group, the enemies of Israel, also appear in the psalm. Little is said about them, except for references to their destruction, past or future. If Israel aligns with Yahweh, these enemies would become enemies of God.

The role of the speaking voice varies in the psalm. For a large part of the psalm, vv. 7–17, the voice assumes the identity of Yahweh.[208] At the opening of the psalm, however, the speaker is a voice of authority, calling the people to joyous worship. The voice knows that Israel's duty is to worship Yahweh. The presence of the plural suffix in v. 2 (עזנו) identifies the speaker as one of the God's people. The voice thus also lies in the scope of the subsequent condemnation of Israel.[209] This may be seen as a sign of hope, for it shows that Israel is not so set in its ways that all its members are insensitive to reform.

6. *Psalm 93*

1. Yahweh reigns!

   He is arrayed in majesty;
   Yahweh is arrayed
   In strength he is clothed.

   Indeed the world is established;
   it will not be shaken.
2. Your throne is established from of old;
   you are from eternity.
3. The rivers lifted up, O Yahweh,
   the rivers lifted up their voices,
   the rivers still lift up their pounding.

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[208] Verse 16 is an interjection by an omniscient third party. Since it confirms v. 15, it may be assimilated into God's speech.

[209] Verse 6, as it has been translated here, confirms the ambivalence of the singer's commitment to God. The obscurity of the verse and the existence of competing textual variants mar its value for identification of the voice.

4. More than the voices of many waters,
   more splendid than the breakers of the sea,
   splendid on high is Yahweh.
5. Your proclamations remain exceedingly reliable
   in your house, the holy dwelling place,
   O Yahweh, for length of days.

v. 1: The LXX includes the superscription εἰς τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ προσαββάτου ὅτε κατῴκισται ἡ γῆ αἶνος ᾠδῆς τῷ Δαυιδ. In 11QPs[a] the psalm opens with הללויה probably secondary; see James A. Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11 (11QPs[a])* (DJD 4; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 43.

The perfect verbal forms that appear in this and several of the following verses are not adequately rendered in English by a past tense, since the past tense may convey the impression that the situations described pertained once but now have ceased – that Yahweh reigned once but no longer does, was once majestically arrayed, but not now, and so on – contrary to the repeated references in the psalm to the everlasting nature of items associated with the divine (vv. 1de, 2, 5). Thus the present tense has been used consistently in the translation.

The translation of the opening clause, יהוה מלך, has attracted extensive debate which almost invariably is coupled with a discussion of the possible early ritual setting for the psalm. Mowinckel postulated a setting for the psalm in an annual preexilic celebration of the enthronement of Yahweh and so translated the clause as "Yahweh has become king" (*Psalms*, 1:106–92). A summary of the subsequent debate appears in John H. Eaton, "'A Bloodless Compromise?' The Question of an Eschatological Ritual in Ancient Israel," in *Crossing the Boundaries: Essays in Biblical Interpretation in Honour of Michael D. Goulder* (ed. Stanley E Porter, Paul Joyce and David E. Orton; BI Series 8; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 69–82. For late postexilic times, such a translation may apply if the psalm is understood eschatologically, as a proleptic experience of the moment when Yahweh's reign is manifested in all its completeness, cf. Rev 11:15, 17; 19:6; see John Day, *God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament* (UCOP 34; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 36–37; Gunkel, *Introduction*, 69. However, as a translation, this idiom is not well supported by biblical evidence; see Diethelm Michel, "Studien zu den sogennanten Thronbesteigungspsalmen," *VT* 6 (1956): 40–68; K. Seybold, H. Ringgren and H.-J. Fabry, "מֶלֶךְ melek; מָלַךְ malak; מְלוּכָה m[e]luka; מַלְכוּת malkut; מַמְלָכָה mamlaka; מַמְלָכוּת mamlakut," *TDOT* 8: 370–71. Thus a durative sense has been chosen for the translation given here; others do this also, e.g., Dahood, *Psalms II*, 340. The cry is a profession of faith, mixed perhaps with polemic overtones or offering encouragement for belief in the face of dissonant experience; see, e.g., Rudolf Mosis, "Ströme erheben, Jahwe, ihr Tosen . . .; Beobachtungen zu Ps

93," in *Ein Gott, eine Offenbarung: Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese, Theologie und Spiritualität; Festschrift für Notker Füglister OSB zum 60. Geburtstag* (ed. Friedrich V. Reiterer; Würzburg: Echter, 1991), 256; Norman C. Habel, *Yahweh versus Baal: A Conflict of Religious Cultures; A Study in the Relevance of Ugaritic Materials for the Early Faith of Israel* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1964), 64. The LXX translation uses the aorist. However, little can be inferred from this, since the perfect is commonly translated by the aorist; see Mozley, *Psalter*, xvi; Hans-Joachim Kraus, *Psalms 60–150: A Commentary* (trans. Hilton C. Oswald; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), 233–34.

There is a mismatch between the number of verbs and their corresponding grammatical objects in v. 1b–d. This may be corrected in one of three ways: read one verb as intransitive, excise a verb, or supply an extra object. A common solution is to read one of the verbs as intransitive. Usually this is the second לבשׁ (e.g., NRSV); see Edward Lipinski, *La Royauté de Yahvé dans la Poésie et las Culte de l'Ancien Israël* (2d ed.; Verhandlingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van Belgie, Klasse der Letteren, 27/55; Brussels: Paleis der Academiën, 1968), 108–14. However, as Mosis has pointed out, this leads to the awkward situation where transitive and intransitive uses of the same verb stand almost side by side, with similar meaning. His solution is to read התאזר as intransitive and עז as the object of the second לבשׁ, see Mosis, "Ströme," 225–33. Others excise the second לבשׁ entirely, although there is no textual evidence for this; see, e.g., Oswald Loretz, *Ugarit-Texte und Thronbesteigungspsalmen: Die Metamorphose des Regenspenders Baal-Jahwe (Ps 24, 7–10; 29; 47; 93; 95–100 sowie Ps 77, 17–20; 114): Erweiterte Neuaufglage von "Psalm 29. Kanaanäische El und Baaltraditionen in jüdischer Sicht" (UBL 2.1984)* (UBL 7; Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 1988), 282. As for supplying an object, the term גאות is too far from the second לבשׁ to be its object. Peter R. Ackroyd, ingeniously, would transfer אף from v. 2a and construe it as the object of התאזר, "he girded himself in wrath"; see "Some Notes on the Psalms," *JTS* 17 (1966): 392–93. This disrupts the parallel between v. 2ab and Ps 96:10bc. A simple solution is to note that the position of עז allows it to do double duty as the object of both לבשׁ and התאזר, cf. Dennis G. Pardee, "The Poetic Structure of Psalm 93," *SEL* 5 (1988): 164.

established: Or the piel of תכן, "he has regulated the world," cf. 11QPs[a].

v. 2: Some interpreters add to the end of this verse, e.g., the Targum adds "god"; see Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 231–32; Howard, *Structure*, 35–36, 38; Lipinski, *Royauté*, 95–96. The addition is often justified on metrical grounds, but this is suspect, and not necessary for the sense; see n. 1 above; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 472.

v. 3: *rivers:* See the comment on Ps 24:2.

pounding: The meaning of דכים, a hapax legomenon, is uncertain. It may be related to דכא/דכה, to crush, and refer either to the action of waves (in parallel with משברי־ים in v. 4b) or the noise made by them (in

parallel with קולם in v. 3b); see Herbert Donner, "Ugaritismen in der Psalmenforschung," *ZAW* 79 (1967): 346–50, esp. 350; H. F. Fuhs, "דָּכָא dakha'; דָּכָה dakhah; דּוֹךְ dokh; דַּךְ dakh; דקק dqq; דַּק daq," *TDOT* 3:195–208; Lipinski, *Royauté*, 98; Loretz, *Ugarit-Texte*, 285–86. The significance of the change to the imperfect in v. 3c is variously interpreted. It is often observed that a *qtl-qtl-yqtl* sequence is a stylistic device found in Ugaritic literature, where the third verbal form has the same meaning as those preceding, so that both the noise and the "pounding" of the rivers have ceased; see Dahood, *Psalms II*, 341; Howard, *Structure*, 38–39; Paul N. Tarazi, "An Exegesis of Psalm 93," *SVTQ* 35 (1991): 143–45; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 472. If this is the case, then the change in tense is purely stylistic. However, the application of this observation on Ugaritic style to the interpretation of a Hebrew psalm a millennium later is moot. If the variation has meaning, then it might indicate that what was once true in the past is also a reality in the present; see Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 231–32; Mosis, "Ströme," 241. Alternatively, both the perfect and imperfect can have an habitual sense, independent of temporal connotation; see F. Charles Fensham, "The Use of the Suffix Conjugation and the Prefix Conjugation in a Few Old Hebrew Poems," *JNSL* 6 (1978): 17; cf. Pardee, "Structure," 165. The LXX omits v. 3c.

vv. 3, 4: Verse 3 is often cited as an example of an expanded colon and v. 4 may be one also, see the comment on Ps 94:3.

v. 4: As it stands in the MT, v. 4 falls short of intelligibility. Many remedies have been suggested for its obscurity. Emendation provides one route. One can, as here, alter v. 4b to read אדיר ממשׁבי־ים, so that משׁבי־ים parallels קלות מים־רבים in v. 3 and אדיר is reiterated in both v. 4b and 4c; see Pardee, "Structure," 164. This solution is in harmony with the stylistic pattern of intensifying repetitions established in the preceding verses. Alternatively, v. 4b may be read as a parallel to v. 4a either by inserting or inferring a ם before אדיר, or supplying מקלות for an ellipsis; see Anderson, *Psalms*, 2:669. Loretz adds אדיר to v. 4a, *Ugarit-Texte*, 278. Another approach finesses the meanings of the words, possibly in conjunction with emendations. Kraus reads מן as "above" in v. 4a, supplies "more than" in v. 4b and translates אדיר differently in v. 4b and v. 4c, while Eaton finds titles for supernatural beings in v. 4ab; see Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 231–32; Eaton, "Questions," 608–9. Dahood reads both רבים and אדירים as adjectives describing Yahweh – stronger than the thundering waters, mightier than breakers (*Psalms II*, 341–42). See further, Howard, *Structure*, 39; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 473. The term אדיר can refer to strength or magnificence; see G. W. Ahlström, "אַדִּיר 'addir; אַדֶּרֶת 'addereth," *TDOT* 1:73–74.

v. 5: *proclamations*: James D. Shenkel, followed by Dahood, has argued on the basis of Ugaritic literature and the parallel with v. 2 that עדת had an alternative, early meaning "throne"; see Shenkel, "Interpretation of Psalm 93:5," *Bib* 46 (1965): 403–7; Dahood, *Psalms II*, 342. Even if this is so, it is unlikely that this early meaning survived into the Second

Temple period. The LXX has μαρτύρια. The translation of עדת as "testimonies, statutes" has the support of many commentators; see Joachim Becker, *Israel deutet seine Psalmen* (SBS 18; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1966), 73–74; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 473; Howard, *Structure*, 39; Lipinski, *Royauté*, 143–48; Tarazi, "Psalm 93," 148.

dwelling place: Accepting the variant נוה as found in 4QPs^{b}, and reading ל as "in." The verse, however, is obscure. The MT and LXX have "holiness suits your house" but נאו occurs only here in this form and the thought expressed sits awkwardly with the rest of the psalm. Shenkel has argued that the verb is derived from נאו, "to praise, glorify" and that the subject is the collective noun קדשׁ, the divine assembly, so "In your temple, the holy ones shall glorify you"; see Shenkel, "Psalm 93:5," 409–14; cf. Dahood, *Psalms II*, 342–43. See further, Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 473–74, 480–81.

The opening words of this psalm, יהוה מלך, have led to its association with other psalms in which this statement occurs (Ps 47:9; 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1; cf. 98:6) and classification as a psalm of the lordship of Yahweh or an enthronement psalm. The different terms themselves reflect a long-running debate over the original setting of such psalms, and in particular over the existence of a festival in pre-exilic Israel in which the enthronement of Yahweh was celebrated or re-enacted.[210] Whatever truth lies in the arguments concerning the early festival setting of the psalm, it is undeniable that by the late Second Temple period such rituals, if they ever existed, had

[210] The literature on this subject is vast. Some studies are listed in the note on v. 1, others include A. Wendall Bowes, "The Basilomorphic Conception of Deity in Israel and Mesopotamia," in *The Biblical Canon in Comparative Perspective* (ed. K. Lawson Younger, William W. Hallo and Bernard F. Batto; Scripture in Context 4; ANETS 11; Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1991), 235–75; David J. A. Clines, "Psalms Research Since 1955: 1. The Psalms and the Cult," in *On the Way to the Postmodern*, vol. 2 (JSOTSup 293; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 639–64; J. Coppens, "Regne de Dieu," *DBSup* 54 (1981): 1–58; Anthony Gelston, "Note on Yhwh mlk," *VT* 16 (1966): 507–12; Bernard Gosse, "Les Introductions des Psaumes 93–94 et Isaïe 59, 15b-20," *ZAW* 106 (1994): 303–6; John Gray, *The Biblical Doctrine of the Reign of God* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979), 7–38; Gunkel, *Introduction*, 66–81; Bernd Janowski, "Das Konigtum Gottes in den Psalmen: Bemerkungen zu einem neuen Gesamtentwurf," *ZTK* 86 (1989): 417; Jorg Jeremias, *Königtum Gottes in den Psalmen: Israels Begegnung mit dem kanaanäischen Mythos in den Jahwe-König-Psalmen* (FRLANT 141; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987), 15–24; Edward Lipinski, "Yahweh Malak," *Bib* 44 (1963): 440–58; Lipinski, *Royauté*, 157–62; Loretz, *Ugarit-Texte*; Paul N. Tarazi, "An Exegesis of Psalm 93," *SVTQ* 35 (1991): 137–38; Jarl H. Ulrichsen, "JHWH MALAK: Einige sprachliche Beobachtungen," *VT* 27 (1977): 361–74; John D. W. Watts, "Yahweh Malak Psalms," *TZ* 21 (1965): 341–48; Peter Welten, "Königsherrschaft Jahwes und Thronbesteigung: Bemerkungen zu unerledigten Fragen," *VT* 32 (1982): 297–310. See also the comment on v. 1 above.

long since passed from memory or had been transformed beyond recognition. This study shall not linger over the point. Strictly speaking, from a form-critical point of view the group of "enthronement psalms" share few characteristics in common apart from the formula.[211] Setting aside interest in the hypothetical early festival setting, the psalm may be classified as a hymn of praise or even a song of Zion.[212]

The psalm exhibits a high degree of internal parallelism, both verbal and semantic, which creates connections among most of its parts and gives a strong sense of unity to the psalm.[213] This simultaneously both facilitates and impedes the structural analysis of the psalm – facilitating in that it allows for divisions to be made on the basis of the parallels and impeding in that no argument for one particular structure can convincingly encompass all the parallels. The structure adopted here groups together vv. 1e–5 on the basis of the inclusion formed by second person address (vv. 2, 5), allusions to God's dwelling place and eternal nature (vv. 2, 5bc), and the permanence of things created by Yahweh (vv. 1ef, 5a).[214] However, cogent arguments exists for other structures. Associating v. 2 with v. 1 gives rise to parallel sections, vv. 1–2 and 3–5, rather than an inclusion.[215] Or, in both of these structures, v. 5 may be separated off.[216] Alternatively, the psalm may be atomized into five sections,

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[211] Watts, "Yahweh Malak."

[212] Gunkel, *Introduction*, 22; Lipinski, *Royauté*, 153, 157. In 11QPs[a], the psalm is followed by the Apostrophe to Zion. Gerstenberger sets the psalm in the postexilic period as a profession of Jewish identity (Yahweh rules, not Persia) and so types it as a "Confessional Hymn" (*Psalms 2*, 175). The classification does not require a postexilic date; threats to religious identity existed in preexilic times also.

[213] Dennis G. Pardee, "The Poetic Structure of Psalm 93," *SEL* 5 (1988): 176. According to Loretz, the psalm in its original form comprised only vv. 1a–2, 3–4 (*Ugarit-Texte*, 278–80, 291). If this is so, then the subsequent editing has skillfully preserved the coherence of the psalm.

[214] Cf. Rudolf Mosis, "Ströme erheben, Jahwe, ihr Tosen . . .; Beobachtungen zu Ps 93," in *Ein Gott, eine Offenbarung: Beiträge zur biblischen Exegese, Theologie und Spiritualität; Festschrift für Notker Füglister OSB zum 60. Geburtstag* (ed. Friedrich V. Reiterer; Würzburg: Echter, 1991), esp. 254.

[215] Jeremias, *Königtum*, 15–17.

[216] So either vv. 1a–d; 1e–4; 5, as, e.g., with Edward Lipinski, *La Royauté de Yahvé dans la Poésie et las Culte de l'Ancien Israël* (2d ed.; VKA, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van Belgie, Klasse der Letteren, 27/55; Brussels: Paleis der Academiën, 1968), 102–3; Dahood, *Psalms II*, 339, or vv. 1–2, 3–4, 5; a structure adopted by Pardee in his detailed analysis of the poem ("Structure" esp 170); see also Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 474.

v. 1a–d, 1e–2, 3, 4, 5.[217] It is tempting to conclude that the psalm possesses multiple structures.[218]

The opening cry, יהוה מלך, stands to some extent outside the psalm. As is evidenced by the debate over the early festival setting of the "enthronement psalms," the meaning of the phrase is quite pliable. It is, perhaps, best inferred in the first instance from the following contents of the psalm, rather than external witnesses.[219]

The first aspect of the lordship of Yahweh which is presented in the psalm is that of divine majesty and power (v. 1bcd). The term גאות recalls the absolute awe-inspiring splendor of deities in the Ancient Near East, that in Akkadian texts is called the *melammu*.[220] The parallel word עז reinforces this image. The verb אזר is applied to Yahweh only here and in Ps 65:7.[221] In most of its other occurrences, the word describes the preparation of humans for a conflict situation.[222] In Ps 93 and 65, however, it appears that the conflict is long past, and that the power with which Yahweh is "girded" represents a permanent characteristic of the divinity.[223]

Attention then appears to shift from Yahweh to creation as the voice declares the stability of the world and permanence of the divine throne in vv. 1ef and 2a.[224] These two statements can be seen as

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[217] Howard, *Structure*, 42.

[218] See further Pierre Auffret, "Yahve Regne: Étude Structurelle du Psaume 93," *ZAW* 103 (1991): 101–9.

[219] Michel, "Thronbesteigungspsalmen," 64–65; Lipinski, *Royauté*, 91.

[220] On גאות and עז see Lipinski, *Royauté*, 108–16; Howard, *Structure*, 36.

[221] Ps 65 contains many parallels to Ps 93, e.g., references to creation, the noise of the sea, the Temple, and Yahweh's providence.

[222] 1 Sam 2:4; 2 Sam 22:40, Is 45:5; 50:11; Jer 1:17; Ps 18:33, 40; Job 38:3; 40:7, but cf. 1 Kgs 1:8; Is 8:9; Ps 30:12.

[223] The other options are that the verb describes Yahweh's preparations for a battle, or assumption of power immediately thereafter; see, e.g., respectively, Mosis, "Ströme," 237–40, and Lipinski, *Royauté*, 108–17. Both of these restrict the time interval spanned by the verb to some limited (mythological) period, which has now passed. However, a limited time-span for the verb conflicts with the emphasis elsewhere in the psalm on eternity (vv. 2, 5). Moreover, attempts to find recollections of a chaos battle in Ps 93 result in an extremely jumbled time sequence for the verses in the psalm – v.1a: after the battle (immediate outcome and long term result), v. 1d: before the battle (preparations), vv. 1ef–2: after the battle (long term outcome), v. 3: before the battle (prior threat), v. 4: during the battle (moment of victory), and v. 5 after the battle (long term outcome).

[224] The declaration of stability has been taken as evidence that this very stability is not self-evident to the audience of the psalm, who believe that the world is in danger of reverting to chaos; see A. Baumann, "מוט mwt; מוֹט mot; מוֹטָה mota," *TDOT* 8:155–57. This inference moves beyond the words of the psalm to the inner thoughts of its audience.

illustrations of Yahweh's power and majesty which precede a statement of praise in v. 2b.[225] However, another, more unified interpretation of vv. 1ef–2a–2b is possible. The three statements are coupled, the first two by כוט, the second and third by the synonyms מאולם and מאז. This suggests that together the three form a sequence and that their interpretation ought to be consistent and flow smoothly from the first to the last (rather than seeing the first as a statement about creation, and the last as a word of praise). Now, their subjects form a pyramid. As the reader traverses them, the focus narrows from the world (v. 1ef), to the seat of divine power (v. 2a), to the one incumbent on that seat (v. 2b).[226] The tripartite structure also carries an intensifying comparison. As the world is established securely (v. 1ef), so even more is the divine throne, and still more than this, is Yahweh. Seen from this perspective, the purported shift to creation in v. 1e is illusory, or at best a rhetorical device in the service of hymnic praise. Yahweh remains center stage. Verses 1ef–2 attest to the eternal permanence of the divine reign.[227]

Verses 3 and 4 introduce another entity, the cosmic waters, denoted variously as נהרות, מים רבים and ים.[228] The translation of these verses is clouded by some textual difficulties.[229] Nevertheless, it seems clear that their intent is to assert the complete superiority of Yahweh over the waters. The standard pattern for interpretation of these verses claims that behind them lies a myth of some cosmic battle between Yahweh and another primordial entity at the dawn of creation.[230]

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[225] Lipinski, *Royauté*, 102.

[226] Thus one should not identify the throne with the world, contra Lipinski, *Royauté*, 118–22. Instead the movement is more akin to that in Ps 24:2–3, where the poet narrows from all creation to the Temple, the prime point of the creation and the presence of God.

[227] Such a reading coheres with the interpretation of the verbs in the preceding line as duratives and allows little room for reminiscence on the process of creation of the world.

[228] The three terms frequently refer to the same entity.

[229] See the comments on vv. 3–4.

[230] E.g., Dahood, *Psalms II*, 339; Day, *God's Conflict*, 35–37; H. F. Fuhs, "דָּכָא dakha'; דַּכָּא dakhah; דּוֹךְ dokh; דַּךְ dakh; דקק dqq; דַּק daq," *TDOT* 3:203; Jorg Jeremias, "Schöpfung in Poesie und Prosa des Alten Testaments: Gen 1–3 im Vergleich mit anderen Schöpfungstexten des Alten Testaments," in *Schöpfung und Neuschöpfung* (ed. Ingo Baldermann et al.; *JBTh* 5; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990), 16–18; Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 234; Lipinski, *Royauté*, 122–34; Spieckermann, *Heilsgegenwart*, 180–86; Tarazi, "Psalm 93," 143–45. Some (e.g., Lipinski) argue that the mythological battle with the sea eventually became historicised as the threat posed to the stability of the Temple by hostile nations, who,

Partial parallels to such a myth existed in the Ugaritic and Mesopotamian traditions. However, one must not move too quickly to decide that an analogous Israelite myth is present in this psalm. Allusions to such a myth, if they exist at all in these verses, must be buried deep in the prehistory of the composition of the psalm. The verses as they stand now in Ps 93 give no hint of the chaos battle, other than using the names of the primordial opponent (ים, נהרות). No conflict is described, nor, more significantly, any creative activity after the battle.[231] The emphasis in vv. 3–4 is on the gulf between Yahweh and the waters. Such a separation is not consistent with the existence of a real threat to Yahweh from the waters; a threat can only be posed by something that can in some way or other approach or interfere with its target. In other words, the imagery itself undermines the proposal that the verses recall a substantive battle. If the verses do indeed depend on the battle myth, then they most likely represent a rejection of it, borrowing its language in order to assert that no credible threat to Yahweh exists.

This line of reasoning can be carried further. Two points in the text deserve careful attention. First, the verb נשׂא (v. 3) can carry the connotation of one person paying homage to another. This usage appeared in another Tamid Psalm, Ps 24. Second, the phrase קלות מים רבים in v. 4 does not necessarily indicate hostility. In fact, it also occurs in Ezek 1:24 and 43:2, in the singular (קול מים רבים), where it describes the audible component of the glorious appearance of God.[232] Just as the vision of God's appearance is terrifying to humans, so too is its sound. However, in neither case should an awesome sensory experience be confused with hostility. The visual component of God's appearance was described in the opening verse of the psalm, using a metaphor of clothing. Now, in vv. 3–4, the audible component is noted, and illustrated through the metaphor of the sounds of cosmic beings.

A superior can be praised just as effectively by the proclamations of loyal and magnificent vassals as by an enumeration of dead

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in other passages are alluded to in terms of their major watercourses (e.g., Is 17:12; 51:9–15; Jer 46:7–8; Ps 46:4; 65:8); see also, Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 379–80. However, in the myth, Yahweh is absolutely victorious over the waters, a situation which never held for Israel and foreign nations.

[231] Cf. Anderson, *Psalms*, 2:668; Habel, *Yahweh versus Baal*, 66; Janowski, "Konigtum," 402; Loretz, *Ugarit-Texte*, 177, 290; Jeremias, *Königtum*, 27; Jeremias, "Schöpfung," 16–19.

enemies. The imagery in vv. 3–4 describes not the cries of a hostile crowd, but the supernatural praise of God by powerful beings. It conjures up the picture of worshippers continually prostrating themselves in homage, like the crashing waves of the sea, before their god and master who is seated on high above them.[233]

This line of interpretation for the role of the waters is not new. It is one of those given in the *Midrash Tehillim* on Ps 93. There, in response to v. 1 a story is told of how the waters praised God at creation and so were given the perpetual honor of being the foundations of the earth. Later, the noise in v. 4 is glossed as the sound of the waters' praise.[234]

The climax of vv. 3–4 comes in v. 4c, where Yahweh is named as the one honored by the rivers and more splendid than the sea. The close of v. 4 also serves to prepare for v. 5, by drawing attention back to Yahweh and his location in heaven (במרום).[235]

The closing verse of the psalm presents a difficulty for interpretation. The first part of the verse, v. 5a, declares the continuing reliability of Yahweh's commands.[236] In parallel with v. 1ef, it recalls the immutability of the divine ordering of the world. The second statement, v. 5b, is obscure. This has lead to several attempts to emend the verse, none of which has won the day. Is it some statement exalting Yahweh's abode (cf. v. 2a), as in the LXX ("Holiness

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[232] Contra Herbert G. May, who argued that מים רבים in almost all of its occurrences refers to enemies; see May, "Some Cosmic Connotations of *mayim rabbim*, 'many waters,' " *JBL* 74 (1955): 9–21. The assessment that May overstated his case is a valid one; see William P. Brown, *Structure, Role, and Ideology in the Hebrew and Greek Texts of Genesis 1:1–2:3* (SBLDS 132; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 205 n. 296.

[233] Cf. Ps 148:7, echoed in Pr Azar 38, where the waters join with the rest of the cosmos in praising Yahweh (cf. vv. 35–41, 53, 55). In the apocrypha, references to Yahweh as king are usually found in doxological settings and do not mention a battle with chaos (1 Esdr 4:46, 58; Add Esth 4:17b, f, j, r; 3 Macc 2:2; Sir 51:1; Tob 13:2, 7, 9, 11, 13, 16, 17; in Jdt 9:12 Yahweh is hailed as the creator of the waters).

[234] In keeping with the overall style of *Midrash Tehillim*, other interpretations of vv. 3–4 appear side by side with this one, and relate these verses to the role of the waters at creation; to Gen 1:9; to the persecution of Israel by the nations; and the noise of the destruction of the Temple. A battle with chaos is not mentioned. See Braude, *Midrash on Psalms*, 125–28.

[235] מרום is a synonym for Yahweh's dwelling place, cf. Jer 25:30; Is 33:5; see Lipinski, *Royauté,* 135.

[236] On עדת, see Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 473. On אמן, see Alfred Jepsen, "אָמַן ʾaman; אֱמוּנָה ʾᵉmunah; אָמֵן ʾamen; אֱמֶת ʾᵉmeth," *TDOT* 1:195–96.

suits your dwelling place")? Or should some emended form of the text be read (as here, following a variant from Qumran)?[237] The psalm closes on a note of eternity.[238]

The last verse contains some parallels with vv. 1ef–2: reference to the divine permanence of the created order (vv. 1ef, 5a), praise of some quality of the divine residence (vv. 2a, 5b) and reference to eternity (vv. 2b, 5c). However, the verse lacks the internal cohesiveness of vv. 1ef–2 with its tight pyramidal development of thought and seems more like a disconnected collection of statements. Nevertheless, the parallels point to a structural consistency in the psalm: under the interpretation of vv. 3–4 given above, the psalm interleaves acclamations of the visible and audible majesty of God (vv. 1bcd, 3–4) with a motif of permanence and references to the place of Yahweh's abode (vv. 1e–2, 5). In this way, the psalm expands on the physical and temporal meaning of the opening proclamation: Yahweh reigns, יהוה מלך!

The psalm ranges widely in its references to time and space. The central location which unites all these, however, is the sanctuary, taken in its dual form as the nexus of the earthly and heavenly residences of Yahweh. It appears explicitly as the site of God's throne (v. 2), the place of climax in vv. 3–4 (v. 4c), and the house of Yahweh (v. 5b). It is also implicit elsewhere in the psalm.[239] The establishment of the world referred to in v. 1ef implies the establishment of the sanctuary, the first point of creation. The praise rendered to God by the sea and rivers (vv. 3–4), on whom the world rested (Ps 24:2) can only take place in the Temple, the point where heaven, earth and the world below touch. The Temple is the place from which the reign of Yahweh takes place (v. 1a) and where Yahweh sits enthroned in splendor (v. 1bc). The important role of Zion in and under the psalm supports the classification of this psalm as a Song of Zion.

The psalm proclaims the supremacy of Yahweh (v. 1a). This is manifested in three ways: appearance (clothed in majesty and strength,

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[237] See the comments on v. 5. Shenkel's reading of v. 5b as praise from the divine assembly ("the Holy Ones praise you in your house . . .") accords well with the description of the homage given to God by the waters in vv. 3–4.

[238] Each of the three occurrences of the phrase לארך ימים concern abiding (or not abiding) in the presence of Yahweh (Ps 23:6, 93:5; and Lam 5:20).

[239] On Mt. Zion and the Temple, see the discussion of Ps 24.

v. 1bcd), superiority when compared with other powerful forces (the sea, etc., vv. 3–4), and permanence, that is, transcendence of the limits of temporality (Yahweh is from of old, etc., vv. 2, 5). The last quality spills over from Yahweh onto things associated with God (earth, throne, laws and house). The proclamation of supremacy and its three manifestations form the theme and supporting motifs in the psalm. The theme finds explicit expression in the opening words of the psalm ("Yahweh reigns").

Other motifs are also present. The stability of the earth and the reliability of Yahweh's laws, although these are associated in the psalm with the permanence of Yahweh, might be considered to be motifs. A motif of the location of Yahweh punctuates the psalm. The place where Yahweh dwells is indicated by the terms throne, on high and house (vv. 2, 4, 5). By pointing to certain locations, culminating in a reference to the Temple, this motif acts to moderate supremacy so that transcendence does not become absence.

It is also worth noting what is absent from the psalm. There is no motif of trouble or oppression, nor of deliverance or of retribution. There is also no explicit reference to a chaos battle against the waters. As discussed above, many commentators see this myth as lying behind the psalm. Even if this is so, the battle itself is not a motif, although some might claim to find subsidiary elements related to its aftermath.

The psalm presents God's supremacy by describing the eternal state and qualities of God. God is characterized by a magnificent appearance, eternal nature and superiority to all else. The psalm does not bring to the fore any actions of God. Although the reference to the foundation of the earth, v. 1, and the regulations, v. 5, can raise the question of origins in the mind of the interpreter, such questions are not addressed in the text. It is the eternal, unchanging nature of the situation that is emphasized. There is no hint that the past or future state may be any different from the present. This is another manifestation of the motif of permanence.

There are other agents in the psalm. These are, however, non-human – the world, Zion (as Temple, throne, high place) and powerful agents (Sea, Rivers, Waters). They take subordinate roles and function as foils in the praise of God. No humans appear in the psalm.

The speaking voice remains constant in the psalm, as an unidentified voice authoritatively describing reality. In vv. 2, 3, 5, Yahweh is directly addressed. The addressee in vv. 1, 4 is not identified.

7. *Psalm 92*

1. A Psalm, a Song for the Sabbath.

2. It is fitting to praise Yahweh,
   and to sing to your name, O Most High;

3. Proclaiming in the morning your gracious kindness,
   and at night your continual faithfulness,
4. With the ten [strings] and with the harp,
   with the accompaniment on the lyre.

5. For you have made me glad by your action, O Yahweh,
   Because of the works of your hands I will shout with joy.
6. How great are your works, O Yahweh!
   [How] very profound your thoughts!

7. The obtuse person does not recognize [this],
   the foolish one does not understand this.
8. Whenever the wicked sprout – like weeds –
   all the doers of evil blossom
   [only] to be eradicated permanently.
9. But you remain on high forever, O Yahweh.
10. For behold your enemies, O Lord;
    for behold your enemies will perish,
    all the doers of evil will be scattered.

11. You have raised my horn like that of a wild ox,
    I am anointed with rich oil.
12. My eye gazes on those who would spy me out,
    my ears hear about [the fate of] the ones who rose against me, the evil doers.
13. The righteous will sprout like a palm tree,
    They will grow great like a cedar in Lebanon,
14. Planted in the house of Yahweh
    in the courts of our God they will flourish.
15. Even in old age will they bear fruit;
    they will be lush and luxuriant;
16. Proclaiming that Yahweh is true,
    My Rock! Indeed there is no perversity in him.

v. 1: *Yahweh*: The suggestion of Dahood, that ליהוה is an example of the vocative use of lamed, has been cogently criticized by Patrick D. Miller;

see Dahood, *Psalms 1*, xl; idem, *Psalms II*, 336; idem, "Vocative Lamed in the Psalter," *VT* 16 (1966): 300–1; Miller, "Vocative Lamed in the Psalter: A Reconsideration," *UF* 11 (1979): 634–35. On change in person as a rhetorical device frequent in Hebrew poetry, see Berlin, "Grammatical Aspects," 30–35, 40. Berlin uses Ps 92 to illustrate types of biblical parallelism (40–41). A fuller discussion of parallelism may be found in her book, *Dynamics*.

v. 3: *at night*: The MT has "in the nights." This may be no more than an example of singular and plural being placed in parallel; see Berlin, "Grammatical Aspects," 40; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 461.

v. 4: On the instruments, see the comment on Ps 81:3–4. The term הגיון may refer to the musical or vocal accompaniment; see Eaton, "Music's Place," 87; Sendrey, *Music*, 157–58.

v. 5: *action*: Some versions read the plural.

Yahweh: Some commentators would omit the divine name in this verse, and also v. 9, on metrical grounds, e.g., Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 227. Meter is not grounds for emendation, see n. 1 above. The LXX reads "κύριε" in v. 5, which indicates the fuller reading was accepted in the late Second Temple period. Tate argues that the presence of the divine name forms a frame for vv. 5–9 (*Psalms 51–100*, 461).

The perfect in v. 5a is paralleled by an imperfect in v. 5b. This may be purely stylistic, in which case both verbs should be translated as past tenses, or it may indicate continuing rejoicing on the part of the psalmist in the present; see Berlin, "Grammatical Aspects," 40; Dahood, *Psalms II*, 336.

v. 6: The perfect verbal forms in this verse here convey a durative sense; see GKC §106g, k, l.

how: Although parallels between interrogative and indicative clauses occur as a stylistic device in Hebrew, the repetition of מה in the translation better conveys the sense of awe felt by the speaker; see Berlin, "Grammatical Aspects", 36–37, 40; Dahood, *Psalms II*, 336.

great . . . profound: There may be a word-play in this verse: the verb עמק also occurs with the meaning of strength (even in postexilic texts, cf. Job 39:21, 1 Chr 12:16; Ezek 3:5, 6), and this would result in a semantic parallel with גדל; see Arnold A. Wieder, "Ugaritic-Hebrew Lexicographical Notes," *JBL* 84 (1965): 162–63.

v. 7: 4QPs^{b} reads "A man is stupid/asinine, so [ו] he does not recognise [this]."

v. 8: The verse has a compact construction and its translation is complicated by the two infinitives. Two issues are crucial. First, at a structural level, is it to be read as a tricolon, or converted into bicola; see n. 258. A tricolon has been adopted here, on the basis of a parallel with v. 10 (but see the LXX which truncates v. 10) and in accord with an overall chiastic structure for the psalm (see below). Second, in interpretation, should the verse be construed as referring to some identifiable past event in which certain evildoers were destroyed (so Sarna and Dahood) or as a general observation on the ordering of the world (so

Tate and Loretz); see Nahum M. Sarna, "The Psalm for the Sabbath Day (Ps 92)," in *Studies in Biblical Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2000): 398–99; repr. from *JBL* 81 (1962); Dahood, *Psalms II*, 335–37; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 461–62; Oswald Loretz, "Psalm 92: Ugaritische Texte und Gattungsforschung," *UF* 25 (1994): 278. The interpretive question is dealt with below.

sprout: For the present tense, see GKC §111v.

v. 9: *on high*: the abode of Yahweh, as in Ps 93:4; מרום is an accusative of place; see GKC §118d. The LXX reads it as a title for Yahweh, as does Dahood, *Psalms II*, 337.

v. 10: An expanded colon, see the comment on Ps 94:3.

v. 11: *wild ox*: The animal is unidentifiable. The LXX has a passive construction, "My horn has been raised like that of a unicorn."

anointed . . .: The translation is traditional, and most likely faulty. Nowhere else does the Qal of בלל appear with a passive sense. Various alternatives appear in the ancient versions: the LXX (and Symmachus) construe the root as בלה, to wear out, "my old age is like rich oil"; the Syriac and Targum emend to בלתני, "You have anointed me with rich oil." Modern suggestions include: (a) "I shine with rich oil" (taking the root as בלג); see Thijs Booij, "The Hebrew Text of Ps 92:11," *VT* 38 (1988): 212–13, and also *DCH*; (b) "You have strengthened me with fresh oil"; see Anderson, *Psalms*, 2:663, following Ernst Kutsch, *Salbung als Rechtsakt: im alten Testament und im alten Orient* (BZAW 87; Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1963), 10–11; (c) "I have smeared [myself or my horn] with fresh oil," see Dennis G. Pardee, "The Preposition in Ugaritic," *UF* 8 (1976): 252; (d) "My old age is like a fresh oil tree," see Samuel E. Loewenstamm, "Balloti b^{e}sämän ra'^{a}nan," *UF* 10 (1978): 111–13; idem, "An Additional Remark on Ps 92:11^{b}," *UF* 13 (1981): 302. No interpretation, however, is overwhelmingly convincing. Indeed, given the variations in the early versions, it seems that the confusion over the verse may go back into Second Temple times. For surveys of the interpretation of the verse, see Booij, "Ps 92," and Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 462–63.

rich oil: The adjective רענן is usually applied to trees with the meaning of "luxuriant, thick with leaves, dense." Of oil, it may indicate either quality ("rich, thick, fresh") or abundance. The term is used metaphorically of people in v. 15; see D. Winton Thomas, "Some Observations on the Hebrew Word R'nn," in *Hebräische Wortforschung: Festschrift zum 80. Geburtstag von Walter Baumgartner* (VTSup 16; Leiden: Brill, 1967), 387–97.

v. 12: *spy*: The nominal form שׁור occurs only here in the MT. The LXX, Syriac, Targums and other sources apparently read a polel participle.

hear: The verb, שׁמע (either in the imperfect, as in the MT and LXX, or perfect, as in 1QPs^{a}) usually requires an object, namely what is heard. The preceding verses imply that this is the news of the destruction of evildoers. Dahood's suggestion that v. 12b is an introduction to the following proclamation and so should be separated from v. 12a violates the parallelism present in the verse (*Psalms II*, 337).

evil doers: It is possible that מרעים is a gloss; see Loretz, "Psalm 92," 278; Mowinckel, *Tricola*, 52–53.

vv. 13–15: These verses form an extended unit based on a botanical metaphor. The shift in number and conjugation in vv. 13–14 should not be over-interpreted; see Berlin, "Grammatical Aspects," 41.

v. 14: *planted*: Or "transplanted," as in *Midr. Teh.*, cf. Ezek 17:8, 10, 22, 23; 19:10; see Braude, *Midrash on Psalms*, 121–22; Morgenstern, "Psalm 48," 81 n. 222.

v. 15: *perversity*: The Qere; see Dahood, *Psalms II*, 338; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 463.

The superscription in both the MT and LXX identifies this psalm as a psalm for use on the Sabbath, the only one of the Tamid Psalms associated with a day in the MT. It cannot be determined whether Ps 92 was composed for this role.[240] It is a psalm of the individual with no immediate or overt connection between its language or content and the Sabbath day. Its use on the Sabbath may well have developed later, perhaps, as *m. Tamid* 7.4 indicates, because the image it portrays of the idyllic life of the righteous and the removal of all evildoers accords with a vision of the perfect future, "for the day that is all Sabbath and rest in eternal life."[241]

The form of the psalm defies easy identification. Intertwined in it are elements reminiscent of a psalm of thanksgiving, a hymn and a

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[240] The psalm also contains the tetragrammaton seven times, a numerological fact in accord with the Sabbath as the seventh day. This observation is of little value in deciding whether the psalm was *composed* for the Sabbath. A sevenfold occurrence of the divine name might have assisted the selection of Ps 92 as the Sabbath psalm, or equally, might have resulted from a later attempt to polish the already selected psalm for its role on the Sabbath. Other numerological phenomena in the psalm are the centrality of v. 9, seven verses from the beginning and the end, 52 words from the beginning and the end, and the occurrence of seven epithets for each of the righteous and the wicked; see Jacob Bazak, "Numerical Devices in Biblical Poetry," *VT* 38 (1988): 335.

[241] Although formally an individual psalm, Nahum M. Sarna has argued that Ps 92 was written intentionally for congregational and cultic use. He presents three pieces of evidence to support his case: the reference to morning and evening in v. 3 recalls the set times for daily worship; the formula in v. 2 recalls a common formulaic statement that Yahweh is good and faithful forever (Ps 106:1; 107:1; 118:29; 136:1); and the musical instruments are those used in worship. The evidence is not convincing: the term לילה in v. 3 (in the plural!) is not commonly used for the afternoon worship; טוב functions differently in v. 2 from the formula Sarna identifies; and a reference to instruments used in worship is not equivalent to worship, indeed, it may be a literary trope. See Sarna, "The Psalm for the Sabbath Day (Ps 92)," in *Studies in Biblical Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2000): 398–99; repr. from *JBL* 81 (1962).

didactic or wisdom psalm (cf. Ps 1).[242] Although it is often categorized as an Individual Psalm of Thanksgiving (showing hymnic and wisdom influence) and sometimes grouped with the royal psalms, it is best seen as an innovative and creative work breaching the boundaries of the traditional forms.[243] As the psalm for the Sabbath, it passed into communal use.

The psalm exhibits a hybrid structure.[244] The skeleton of a concentric ring structure (chiasm) is in evidence, but this is overlaid, and thereby confused, by a sequential development of motifs and contrasts. The chiastic frame is most clearly seen in the parallel between vv. 3 and 16 and the ABA' organization of vv. 8–10.[245] Under such a structure, the psalm may be divided into: v. 1 (the superscription, outside the ring structure); A = vv. 2–4; B = vv. 5–7; C = v. 8; D = v. 9; C'= v. 10; B'= vv. 11–12; A' = vv. 13–16.[246]

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[242] The elements of hymn and thanksgiving are not always easily distinguished. Tate identifies vv. 1–5, 11–12 as typical of a thanksgiving psalm, vv. 6, 9–10 as hymnic and vv. 7–8, 13–16 as showing wisdom characteristics (*Psalms 51–100*, 464). On the other hand, Gunkel treats vv. 2–9 under the rubric of hymns and sees the later verses, along with v. 5, as more proper to a thanksgiving psalm, with wisdom elements in vv. 7, 10 (*Introduction*, 22, 58, 199, 297 *inter alia*). Frank Crüsemann sketches the intertwining of the forms in vv. 2–5; see Crüsemann, *Studien zur Formgeschichte von Hymnus und Danklied in Israel* (WMANT 32; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1969), 283 n. 1.

[243] Cf. Crüsemann, *Studien zur Formgeschichte*, 283 n. 1; Oswald Loretz, "Psalm 92: Ugaritische Texte und Gattungsforschung," *UF* 25 (1994): 284–85. Gunkel, Kraus and Tate, for example, place Ps 92 in the category of Psalms of Thanksgiving (Gunkel, *Introduction*, 199; Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 227; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 464); Anderson leans towards its classification as a hymn (*Psalms* 2:660); Gerstenberger classes it as either a Hymnic Prayer or a Confessional Prayer (*Psalms 2*, 171–72); Mowinckel, Dahood and Eaton view it as a royal psalm (Mowinckel, *Psalms*, 2:29; Dahood, *Psalms II*, 336; Eaton, *Kingship*, 58–59). The last classification assumes the psalm is preexilic and applies only to its use in that period.

[244] Issues to be addressed in determining the structure of the psalm include: (1) the weight to be given to the parallel between vv. 3 and 16; (2) the force of כי in v. 5; (3) the organisation of vv. 8–10, whether as a colon surrounded by two tricola or, reading vv. 8 and 9 together, as two bicola followed by a tricolon (cf. n. 258); (4) the presence of the botanical imagery in vv. 8, 13–15; (5) the scope of v. 5 (and v. 6) as an introduction to the works of Yahweh and the subsequent description of these works, in particular in relation to vv. 8 and 11; (6) the repetition of words and concepts (e.g., פעל, רענן, פרח, opponents, wicked and righteous).

[245] Assuming vv. 8 and 10 are read as tricola.

[246] Tate reports that this structure was suggested by R. M. Davidson in 1988 (*Psalms 51–100*, 464). A chiastic arrangement for Ps 92 was identified earlier by Jonathan Magonet, "Some Concentric Structures in Psalms," *HeyJ* 23 (1982): 369–72, esp. 370; see also Pierre Auffret, *Voyez de vos yeux: ètude structurelle de vingt psaumes dont le psaume 119* (VTSup 48; Leiden: Brill, 1993), 301–17. Magonet includes v. 5 in

The ring structure, however, is not as well-defined as this outline implies. Although vv. 5–7 and 11–12 both talk of God's work on behalf of the psalmist, the parallels between these sections are rather weak. Further, while vv. 3 and 16 are certainly analogous, the relation between vv. 2–4 and 13–15 is less clear. To assert that they both assume a location in the Temple (implicitly in v.4 as the place where the instruments are played) is valid, but weak.[247] In fact, vv. 13–15 is an expanded contrast to the imagery of v. 8, breaching the parallelism of the ring structure.

Linear structures also occur in the psalm and overlap the divisions of the ring structure. In vv. 7–10 there is an intensification in the designation of the opposing forces, from foolish people to enemies of God, and in vv. 11–15 the identity of those aligned with God is generalized from the psalmist to all righteous. Indeed, vv. 7–10 and 11–15 can be seen as contrasting blocks of material, both of which illustrate the works of God introduced in vv. 5–6.

These observations lead to an alternative structure combining linear and parallel elements: v. 1 is the superscription; vv. 2–4 is an introductory call to worship in which v. 2 is the call proper and vv. 3–4 a parallel development which explains how to fulfill the call; vv. 5–15 present a realization or illustration of this explanation in which vv. 5–6 contain a non-specific proclamation by the psalmist concerning Yahweh's faithfulness while vv. 7–10 and 11–15 develop this proclamation in two contrasting ways, the first dealing with the destruction of opponents and the second with the circumstances of the righteous; finally, v. 16 recapitulates v. 3.[248]

The psalm opens with a call to praise Yahweh. Although not cast in the imperative, this verse is in effect a command. The most common meaning for טוב is utilitarian, indicating suitability for a cer-

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the first section. However, כי typically introduces the main section of a hymn; see Gunkel, *Introduction*, 29. A dual structure (linear+ring) was also identified in Mark 2:1–3:6 by Joanna Dewey, see John R. Donahue and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark* (Sacra Pagina 2; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2002), 97.

[247] Magonet, "Concentric Structures," 369.

[248] Verse 7 could be associated with vv. 5–6 or vv. 8–10. The linear and ring structures agree up to v. 10. Loretz explains the complexity of the psalm with regard to both genre and structure in terms of its compositional history. He sees an original psalm comprising only vv. 2–5, 11–12, first expanded with the additions of vv. 6–9, 10, and later, via keywords, with 13–14 and 15–16. He concludes that it is inappropriate to attempt to analyze the psalm as a unit. See Loretz, "Psalm 92," 282–85.

tain function. The word is often used of fulfilling contractual agreements.[249] Verse 2 thus implies that it is the natural function of humans in general (cf. v. 7), and the obligation of Israel as the people of God in particular, to praise and sing to Yahweh. In vv. 3–4 these two human functions, to praise and to sing, are taken up and developed further. In v. 3, the praise of v. 2a is specified as the proclamation of Yahweh's אמונה and חסד, that is, Yahweh's reliable, indeed predictable, conduct in the relationship with humanity, conduct that manifests itself in beneficial actions.[250] This proclamation should be made at all times (day and night). The following verse (v. 4) expands on the motif of singing (v. 2b), listing what were probably common instruments used to accompany worship. Taken as a whole, the first block of the psalm (vv. 2–4) encourages the performance of compositions that declare the gracious actions of Yahweh. In the following verses, and in the psalm as a whole for that matter, the speaking voice itself carries out this command.

Verse 5 starts a new section in the psalm. Now the voice particularizes to personal experience. The speaker has found cause to rejoice in some (as yet unspecified) action or actions of Yahweh. Remembrance of this joy forms the basis for the cry of praise found in v. 6.

What is this deed (or deeds) in which the voice finds joy? The psalm never explicitly identifies Yahweh's action(s). In the interpretation of the psalm, however, there are three ways to explain the gap. First, the vagueness might be deliberate. Perhaps the reference is intended to cover any and every beneficial action carried out by Yahweh. Or perhaps the allusion is a portmanteau, to be filled by whatever cause for joy the listener brings. Second, one might try to identify the action(s) on the basis of other verses in the psalm. Three activities of Yahweh are mentioned in the following verses (the destruction of the wicked enemies of Yahweh, vv. 7–10, the providential care of the speaker, vv. 11–12, and the blessed future of the righteous, vv. 13–15). These three might be summarized as Yahweh's care for the psalmist, taken as presaging the more general observations on the treatment anticipated for the wicked and the righteous. Third, one might attempt to identify Yahweh's deed(s) by reference

[249] I. Höver-Johag, "טוֹב tob; טוּב tub; יטב ytb," *TDOT* 5:296–318, esp. 304, 311.
[250] Jepsen, *TDOT* 1:316–20; Zobel, TDOT 5:44–64.

to some source other than the psalm. Typically, such an approach finds in the psalm allusions to a myth of a battle between Yahweh and the forces of chaos which resulted in the creation (or ordering) of the cosmos.[251]

At the core of this third line of interpretation lies a comparison between v. 10 and a line of Ugaritic verse (KTU 2.iv.8–9) on the mythic battle between Baal and Yamm, a comparison usually taken to imply close literary dependence.[252] Once the mythological associations of v. 10 are secured, they are extended backwards to the interpretation of the preceding verses, the parallel v. 8 and the nonspecific references in vv. 5–6.[253] From a methodological point of view, however, the move from a subsequent to a prior verse is suspect. The opposite movement is both more natural and quite viable in Ps 92. Verse 8 is not incomprehensible without v. 10. It can stand on its own as an imaginative statement of one of the commonly accepted moral principles of the cosmos. Thus verse 8 easily provides a conceptual frame in which to interpret v. 10. It is more likely that the listener would first interpret v. 8 and then, on the basis of this, the later v. 10, rather than hold off interpreting v. 8 until the reception of v. 10 and the realization of its associations with some myth. More tellingly, these mythical associations themselves are not secure. There are significant differences in language, grammar and content between these two lines in Hebrew and Ugaritic and these undermine the case for dependence.[254]

Further, even if the presence of the myth in the cultural heritage of Israel is accepted, there is, nevertheless, considerable uncertainty

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[251] Sarna, "Psalm for the Sabbath," 398–403; Dahood, *Psalms II*, 337; Loretz, "Psalm 92," 279–82; Kraus, *Psalms 60–150*, 229. Under this interpretation, מחשבה in v. 6 might be regarded as a reference to Yahweh's plan of creation, and the blessed state of the righteous an allusion to the state of sabbath rest after creation.

[252] The lines from the Baal cycle are *ht.ibk/bʿlm.ht.ibk.tmḫṣ.ht.tṣmtṣrtk* "Now your enemy [Yamm], O Baal// now your enemy smash//now vanquish your foe."

[253] Sarna, "Psalm for the Sabbath," 401; Loretz, "Psalm 92," 281.

[254] There is only one word in common, "enemy," but in the Ugaritic poem it refers to Yamm, while in the Hebrew, the (plural) evildoers. In one place, Baal is encouraged to act, in the other the enemies are the subject of the verbs. The actions are different, smiting vs. becoming extinct. The outcomes differ; in one conquest leads to the assumption of kingship, KTU 2.iv.10, in the other, lordship is eternal, v. 9. It is doubtful if any parallel exists other than that of coincidental use of a common stylistic device (the expanded colon) in a reference to confrontation. See, e.g., Herbert Donner, "Ugaritismen in der Psalmenforschung," *ZAW* 79 (1967): 344–46; Anderson, *Psalms* 2:663.

as to its role in the composition of Ps 92.[255] In Ps 92, the conflict is expressed in historical, not mythical, terms and there is nothing to indicate that the enemies are supernatural beings. This introduces a degree of separation between the supposed myth and the psalm. How is this separation to be accommodated in the interpretation of the psalm? Does the psalm know and accept the myth, but historicize it? Does it react against the myth through historicization? Or does it not know the myth in anything other than its historicized form? These questions are unanswerable, yet each option influences interpretation in a different way. The assumption of chaos leads only to chaos.[256]

Hence the first two options for filling the gap in v. 5 are to be preferred over the third as ways of identifying the references to the works of Yahweh. These two are not incompatible. By means of a general reference in v. 5, which may trigger the recollection of some personal experience in the hearer, the psalm creates an appreciation of Yahweh's beneficence and then, once this has been established, moves in v. 8 to concentrate the listener's thoughts on particular actions of Yahweh.

Between this general praise of God's work in vv. 5–6 and the instance in v. 8 lies a verse which distinguishes in a derogatory way a class of people who lack a certain insight (v. 7). The language and thought is typical of wisdom traditions.[257] The type of insight is left unspecified. The verse may refer back to the words of praise for Yahweh's works in v. 6, or forward to the principle expressed in v. 8. In either case, its rhetorical effect on the hearer would be the same, reinforcing agreement with the sentiments expressed in the psalm, for, naturally, the hearer would not self-identify with a fool, but with one who did understand.

Verses 8–10 form a block whose thrust is to highlight the certain doom of those who oppose Yahweh. Verse 8 expresses the common

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[255] Loretz, "Psalm 92," 281–82.

[256] The problem of separation is only exacerbated when Ps 92 is treated as a daily psalm. How ought one transfer the meaning of a section of Ugaritic verse from the second millennium to the interpretation of a Hebrew psalm one thousand years later?

[257] For example, כיסל is most frequently found in proverbs, e.g., Prov 14:7, 8; 15:7. See J. Schüpphaus, "כסל ksl; כְּסִיל kᵉsil; בְּסִילוּת kᵉsilut; בֶּסֶל kesel; כִּסְלָה kisla," *TDOT* 7:264–69; and also Helmer Ringgren, "בער bʿr; בַּעַר baʿar; בַּעִיר baʿir," *TDOT* 2:201–5; idem, "בין bin; בִּינָה binah; תְּבוּנָה tᵉbhunah," *TDOT* 2:99–107. Disparaging observations about the foolish are common in wisdom literature.

moral principle that evil will not endure, no matter how successful it may appear at any given time. It does so using the metaphor of the life cycle of grass (עשׂב), which springs up under the right conditions, seemingly strong and ubiquitous, flowers and then dies away. As noted above, v. 8 provides a context for interpreting v. 10, a parallel statement on the destruction of the enemies of Yahweh. The two are linked by the repetition of the phrase "all doers of evil" (כל־פעלי און) and the concept of total destruction. Between these two stands a short statement of praise for God (v. 9).[258] This verse contrasts God's permanence with the transience of the doers of evil and God's location (above and at a specific point) with the widespread, scattered distribution of evildoers on earth.

The opponents of Yahweh are denoted in several ways in this block, as the wicked, doers of evil and enemies of Yahweh (איביך, רשׁעים, פעלי־און). The repetition of "doers of evil" in vv. 8 and 10 indicates that these three terms describe the same group. It is tempting to see a progression in the description of the opponents extending from v. 7 to v. 10. In v. 7 a group known only as the foolish are introduced. The term by itself does not suggest they pose a threat. In v. 8 they become the wicked, who gain worldly success by harming others. By v. 10 this behavior has made them the enemies of Yahweh.

The block vv. 8–10 also provides three elements that recur later in the psalm. The botanical metaphor in v. 8 prepares the ground for the more extended description of the righteous in v. 13–15 as trees, not springing up in the wild, but cultivated close to Yahweh (and also, perhaps, for the more obscure claim of the psalmist in v. 11b).[259] The mention of Yahweh's location, מרום, anticipates the location where the righteous thrive (i.e., the Temple). Finally the concept of opponents reappears in v. 12, suggesting perhaps that

[258] There are two options for the structure of vv. 8–10 as these verses are preserved in the MT (but not the LXX). Either v. 8 and v. 10 are taken as two parallel tricola, in which case v. 9 stands as the central point in contrast to both of these verses, or vv. 8 and 9 are divided into two bicola, v. 8ab and vv. 8c–9, in which case the constrast in v. 9 is limited only to v. 8c, and v. 10 is an isolated tricolon (cf. the LXX, where v. 10 is truncated). The variations in structure make little difference to the interpretation of the block. The first option is the one adopted here. See Adele Berlin, "Grammatical Aspects of Biblical Parallelism," *HUCA* 50 (1979): 40–41; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 467.

[259] Note the repetition of פרח in vv. 8, 13–14.

the psalmist is identifying those who prepared evil for him with the enemies of Yahweh.

With v. 11 the psalm shifts to emphasize the constructive and beneficial deeds of Yahweh on behalf of the righteous, rather than the destruction of the wicked. The section starts with a personal testimony from the speaking voice, vv. 11–12. Technical difficulties cloud the understanding of these two lines. Broadly speaking, v. 11 suggests that Yahweh has provided strength and physical well being for the speaker, but the precise imagery is obscure.[260] Verse 12 recalls an occasion when the voice felt threatened. Whether this threat is past, removed by the action of Yahweh (as the wicked were removed in vv. 8, 10) or remains a continuing experience of the speaking voice (cf. Ps 23:4–6) is not spelled out. In any event, it seems that Yahweh is a source of security and prosperity for the voice.

After this the psalm again moves into a more general key, as the psalmist delivers a programmatic statement about the life of the righteous.[261] Their fate is quite the opposite of the wicked in vv. 8–10. They will live long and prosperous lives clustered close to Yahweh. The contrast is underscored by the botanical imagery – stately trees, not frail weeds; producing fruit, not merely flowering; with a long rich life, well beyond one season.[262] Even the lengths of the descriptions in v. 8 and 13–15 underscore the contrast – in one, three short statements, in the other, six richly developed clauses.

It is unlikely that this botanical imagery was matched by the actual conditions present in the Temple in the late Second Temple period. According to one account, no trees grew in the Temple grounds, but even if there were trees at some point in the period, they would be nothing like a stand of cedars of Lebanon.[263] The imagery is

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[260] Elsewhere, the raising of the horn is a symbol of strength and assurance, e.g., 1 Sam 2:1, 10; 2 Sam 22:3; Jer 48:25; Ps 18:3; 75:5–6; 75:11; 89:18, 25; 112:9; 118:27; 148:14; Job 16:15; Lam 2:17; 1 Chr 25:5. On v. 11b; see the comment on v. 11.

[261] The repetition of רענן in vv. 11, 15 provides a lexical link between the reward received by the speaking voice and that for the righteous. Samuel E. Loewenstamm creates another link between the voice and the righteous when he argues that שׁמן itself is the name of a tree, shortened from שׁמן עץ; see Loewenstamm, "Balloti b^{e}sämän ra'^{a}nan," *UF* 10 (1978): 111–13; idem, "An Additional Remark on Ps 92:11^{b}," *UF* 13 (1981): 302.

[262] Cf. Ps 1. A comparison of these two psalms appears in Loretz, "Psalm 92," 285–86.

[263] Sanders, *Judaism*, 55–56; Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 468.

idealistic, pointing to the conditions of paradise. It draws on that constellation of ideas that surrounded the Temple as the residence of Yahweh and a place that participated at one and the same time in both heavenly and mundane realities.[264]

This does not, however, force an eschatological interpretation for vv. 13–15, although one is possible. It is common in psalms to describe conditions in an exaggerated fashion. Indeed, the description of the personal state of the speaking voice in vv. 11–12 might well be an example of this. The same quality of exaggeration might apply here in vv. 13–15. To the eyes of faith, the righteous as they gather to praise God in the Temple (vv. 2–4) may appear as stately and luxuriant trees. Precisely this claim is made in Sir 50:12 about the High Priest Simon, who, when he officiates at the sacrifice, stands like a cedar of Lebanon surrounded by palm-trees. Indeed, this literary parallel is sufficiently close to be allowed as evidence that a non-futurist interpretation existed for Ps 92 in the late Second Temple period.[265]

The last verse of the psalm, v. 16, recalls v. 3 and together they frame the intervening verses. The psalm had opened with instructions about praising God, explained in v. 3 as the proclamation of the faithful beneficial actions of God. In the verses that followed, examples of this action were presented. Verse 16 closes off the presentation by returning to the call to proclaim. Now what is to be proclaimed is the essential integrity (יֹשֶׁר) of God's activity, an integrity on which the psalmist, and the righteous, found their lives (צוּרִי).[266]

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[264] See n. 20.

[265] Moshe Weinfeld has argued that the portrayal of rest in the Temple can be connected with creation, in part through the creation-battle myth (which in one form supposes that the construction of the Temple and the subsequent rest for the deity followed after the victory of the deity and the creation of the world). In this case, the portrayal of rest in the Temple in Ps 92:12–15 could be associated with creation; see Weinfeld, "Sabbath, Temple and the Enthronement of the Lord – The Problem of the Sitz im Leben of Genesis 1:1–2:3," in *Mélanges bibliques et orientaux en l'honneur de M. Henri Cazelles* (ed. A. Caquot and M. Delcor; AOAT 212; Kevelaer: Verlag Butzon & Bercker, 1981), 501–12; also Tate, *Psalms 51–100,* 469–70. This link, if it exists at all, is tenuous. Weinfeld's discussion concerns rest for the deity, whereas Psalm 92 speaks of rest for the righteous Also, adjacent references to rest and the Temple do not automatically imply a background of the creation battle, cf. 2 Sam 7:1–2 which also involves rest after conflict and the Temple; Ps 132:14–19, where rest is associated with the election of Zion.

[266] Cf. Deut 32:4. On יָשַׁר, see Helmer Ringgren, L. Alonso Schökel and W. Meyer, "יָשַׁר yasar; יֹשֶׁר yoser; יִשְׂרָה yisra; מִישׁוֹר misor; מֵישָׁרִים mesarim," *TDOT*

More than an instruction, the closing verse is a call for the listeners to trust Yahweh in the face of crisis.[267]

The theme of the psalm is that Yahweh acts to support the righteous and remove the wicked. This is illustrated by general statements about the fate of the these parties and by a personal testimony from the psalmist, and is envisioned as a completed action. The theme is framed by a motif of worship of Yahweh, to which it is linked through the assertion that praise is the proper response of the righteous to the acts of Yahweh.

The theme may be split into several motifs relating to Yahweh's actions. There are motifs concerning Yahweh's actions on behalf of the righteous, namely, the rescue of the righteous (individual) from threat and the provision of benefits to the righteous (individually and as a class). These are balanced by motifs of Yahweh's actions against the wicked – the thwarting of their plans and their ultimate destruction. Underlying these is the familiar motif of the division of humanity into two groups, the righteous and the wicked. Yahweh is presented as reliable (חסד, אמונה, ישר, לא־יולתה). The fates of the different parties are presented using botanical motifs derived from metaphors of (transient) grass and (permanent and fruitful) trees. In fact, references to permanence (or impermanence) occur sufficiently often in the psalm that this too can be seen as a theme. Yahweh enjoys permanence (v. 9) and this property is also passed to the righteous, but not the wicked. Finally there is the motif of worship as an activity involving music and proclamation.

The style of the psalm is marked by a great use of contrasts. There are dichotomies between permanence and impermanence

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6:463–72. On צור, see Olofsson, *God is my Rock*, 35–44; this term carries connotations of Yahweh's protective role in Jerusalem. It is possible, as Tate does, to parse להנגיד in this verse as a circumstantial infinitive, presenting what the righteous (of vv. 13–15) do (*Psalms 51–100*, 463). However, the connection with the preceding verses should not be overemphasized, as it shatters the metaphor of the righteous as trees, assiduously engaged in growing and bearing fruit in the house of Yahweh. The verses preceding v. 16 belong inside the boundary marked by vv. 3–4 and 16. One could excise them and still have a meaningful psalm. So v. 16 is a parallel to v. 3, not a development of v. 15. A connection with the righteous does come about, however, through the parallel with v. 3. The righteous proclaim because, by their nature, they do what is fitting (v. 2).

[267] In this psalm the problem of theodicy is given a practical answer, that one should hold fast, and wait for the season to change and the grass to wither.

(vv. 8, 9, 15), worship (praise) and ignorance (vv. 2–6, 15, 7), weeds and trees (vv. 8, 13–15), centrality (in the Temple) and dispersion (vv. 10, 14), reliability and perversity (vv. 3, 16, 12), success and failure (vv. 11, 12).

The motifs are intertwined. For example, permanence is a property associated with Yahweh (v. 9) which then becomes associated with the botanical motif through the different life-spans of trees and grass, and this in turn links into the division between the wicked and the righteous, which is manifested not only in their different fates but also in their different reactions to Yahweh, in particular as regards worship.

The characterization of the agent Yahweh accentuates activity (vv. 5, 6, 11). Even the attributes ascribed to Yahweh stress the constancy and predictability of Yahweh's actions (חסד, אמונה, יֹשר, לא־עולתה). These properties are illustrated by the examples of benefits to the righteous and the removal of the wicked. Yahweh is seen as the nemesis of the wicked and the benefactor of the righteous.

Humanity is divided into two groups, the wicked (פעלי־און, רשׁעים, איביך, אישׁ־בער, כסיל) and the righteous (צדיק; this category includes the speaking voice). The wicked do not perceive Yahweh's actions. Their plans are destined to frustration and they themselves to destruction. The psalm is not specific about the actions of the wicked. It attributes ignorance and malevolence to them (vv. 7, 12). The righteous receive protection and benefits from Yahweh. The behavior associated with the righteous appears to be that they praise and worship Yahweh and enjoy his benefits. The Temple is the natural locus of the righteous (v. 14), while Yahweh's place is "on high" (מרום, v. 9). The wicked, by contrast, have no place, only dispersion.

The speaking voice remains constant throughout the psalm. It identifies itself as one of Yahweh's people, i.e., one of the righteous (vv. 14, 16). True to this characterization, the voice models the behavior of the righteous, by revealing that it has received protection and sustenance from Yahweh (vv. 11–13) in the discursive address of praise to Yahweh (vv. 5–15).

CHAPTER FOUR

THE COLLECTION

At some point in time, each of the seven psalms discussed individually in the preceding chapter came to be used as a morning psalm in the Temple worship. No clear record of the date of their selection, the historical circumstances or the religious motivations for their choice survives. Once they entered the liturgy the seven psalms became a group, if only by virtue of their common use in the morning worship service. Whatever the circumstances or rationale (if any) for their selection, the group may be viewed as a literary composition of the late Second Temple period.

Consequently, it is valid to ask of the composite text of the Tamid Psalms the same sorts of questions that might be asked of other works produced by traditional techniques of reuse and redaction. Such an investigation may be divided loosely into two parts: (1) matters that deal with the composition as a literary unit and the relation of the parts to the whole, and (2) matters that deal with the relation of the composition to its life context in Temple worship and Judaism. In this chapter, the first set will be studied. How do the psalms interact by virtue of their juxtaposition? What do they have in common – vocabulary, motifs, agents – and what implications does the presence of these common elements have for the interpretation of the composition? How do the common elements found in the context of one psalm affect the interpretation of another? What are the predominating motifs and agents in the whole work? Can one determine a theme for the work? Is there evidence for order in the psalms, via structural indicators or thematic progression? Can a rationale for the collection be determined?

These questions assume different degrees of intentionality in the composition of the Tamid Psalms. The first few concern similarities in the psalms – common vocabulary, motifs, characters, etc. Such matters do not require much (or imply much) in the way of premeditated compositional activity on the part of the selectors of the psalms. The choices made by the selectors reflect their circumstances, received traditions and world-view, but a conscious analysis of these

factors may not have occurred. The later questions concern the overall design of the composition and suppose a greater degree of self-conscious creative work on the part of the collectors in their selection and ordering of the psalms.

The discussion of the Tamid Psalms as a literary composition begins with an analysis of the vocabulary of the collection. This analysis provides clues to questions concerning similarity and order. Such an analysis is inadequate on its own and the investigation must extend to larger semantic units, in particular, the motifs and agents found in the psalms. Units held in common between pairs of psalms are considered first and implications for the structuring of the collection are drawn. After this, the prevailing elements in the whole collection are examined. The question of the existence of a theme for the collection is considered next and a candidate identified and explicated. The final part considers the matter of a rationale for the order and structure of the collection.

One conclusion drawn in this chapter is that the Tamid Psalms are arranged in a coherent sequential fashion from first day of the week to the Sabbath with an identifiable theme and, what is more, a development of thought (i.e., plot or story-line) running through the week.

1. *Vocabulary*

In this section, the distribution of vocabulary in the Tamid Psalms is explored. Minor, extremely common words (prepositions, conjunctions, the article, and so on) are omitted from consideration and only "significant" vocabulary tabulated.[1] The psalm superscriptions are ignored. Calculation of frequency and distribution for words in the seven psalms is straightforward.

The following is a list of significant words that occur five times or more in the bodies of the Tamid Psalms.[2]

יהוה	(Lord)	31	רשׁע	(guilty)	6
אלהים	(God)	21	אל	(god)	5
נשׂא	(to lift)	12	ידע	(to know)	5

[1] Words omitted will be identified in the footnotes.

[2] "Significant": the list omits prepositions, conjunctions, interrogatives, pronouns, the article and the negative, סלה (5×) and כל (8×).

ארץ	(earth)	8	כבוד	(glory)	5
שׁמע	(to heed)	8	מלך	(king)	5
עולם	(ever)	7/8[3]	פעל	(to do)	5
עם	(people)	6	שׁפט	(to judge)	5

From the list, it can be seen that no word or root is dominant in the daily psalms.[4] Even the designation of God, which would be expected to have a high occurrence, is split between two terms, neither of which predominates. Unfortunately, the list conveys little other insight. There are two reasons for this. First, the psalms have been lumped together. The list does not contain information about the distribution of words across psalms. For example, כבוד only occurs in one psalm, Ps 24, in a highly repetitious section, whereas ידע occurs in five psalms. Second, semantic considerations have been ignored. For example, the list does not take into account synonyms. Various Tamid Psalms refer to a group who behave improperly. Several terms are used for this group, of which רשׁע and פעל־און are but two. Conversely, the people of God are named in various ways (including ישׂראל and יעקב) but none of these terms appear in the list. Another omission is that of the residence of God, which is known under diverse names in the Tamid Psalms, including ציון, הר, היכל and בית. The first inadequacy is dealt with in the current section, the second in the next.

The first objection may be overcome by counting the number of psalms in which a word or root occurs. Once again, this is a simple task, albeit tedious. Relatively few roots occur in four or more psalms.[5] These are (the number of psalms in the Psalter that contain that word is in parentheses):

יהוה	6 psalms, not 82	(140)	צדק (root)	24, 48, 82, 94, 92	(61)
אלהים	6 psalms, not 93	(102)	לב/לבב	24, 48, 94, 81	(77)
ארץ	24, 48, 82, 94, 81	(90)	קום	24, 82, 94, 92	(38)
ידע (root)	48, 82, 94, 81, 92	(63)	שׁמע	48, 82, 94, 81	(54)
נשׂא	24, 82, 94, 81, 93	(35)	מפשׁט/שׁפט	48, 82, 94, 81	(47)
עולם	24, 48, 81, 93, 92	(65)			

Eighteen significant words or roots are common to exactly three psalms, and 57 to two psalms.[6]

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[3] Depending on the reading of Ps 48:15.
[4] The occurrence of נשׂא is biased by its fourfold repetition in Ps 24:7–10.
[5] Omissions are the same as in n. 2.
[6] The words or roots appearing in 3 psalms (with frequency of occurrence) and

Common vocabulary is recognized as one mode of association between texts on a literary level. The more vocabulary is shared, the closer the two texts appear. Common vocabulary is thus a unifying force in a composition. In the case of the Tamid Psalms, the extent of the common vocabulary is summarized in the following table, which lists the absolute count of common (significant) words between pairs of psalms and their relative proportions.[7]

Ps	48	82	94	81	93	92
24	11 (27%)	6 (16%)	9 (22%)	9 (22%)	9 (31%)	3 (7%)
48		4 (11%)	11 (17%)	8 (13%)	5 (17%)	8 (13%)
82			14 (38%)	8 (22%)	3 (10%)	8 (22%)
94				14 (18%)	7 (24%)	18 (26%)
81					7 (24%)	10 (15%)
93						4 (14%)

The percentages in this table give the number of common words in the two psalms as a percentage of the number of significant words in the *shorter* of the two psalms. The rationale for this metric is this: Heuristically, two long texts are more likely to have common vocabulary than two small texts, or, conversely, the impression of coher-

psalms they appear in are: אל (5) 82, 94, 81; בין (4) 82, 94, 92; חסד (3) 48, 94, 92; יד (3) 82, 81, 92; יום (3) 81, 94, 93; יעקב (3) 24, 94, 81; כון (4) 24, 48, 93; מוט (3) 82, 94, 93; מלא (3) 24, 48, 81; מלך (root 6) 24, 48, 93; עדה (root 4) 82, 81, 93; עז (root 3) 24, 81, 93; צור (3) 94, 81, 92; קדשׁ (3) 24, 48, 93; רבב (root 3) 48, 94, 93; רשׁע (6) 94, 82, 92; היה (4) 94, 81, 92; מאד (3) 48, 93, 92. The words or roots appearing in two psalms (with frequency if it is more than 2) and psalms are: אדם (3) 94, 82; אזן (4) 94, 92; איב 81, 92; אמן 93, 92; אמר (4) 94, 82; בית 93, 92; בער 94, 92; גאה 94, 93; גבר (3) 24, 94; גדל (94, 92; גוי 82, 94; דור 24, 48; דכא 94, 93; דמה 48, 94; הלך (3) 82, 81; הר (4) 24, 48; זמר 81, 92; חק 94, 81; יום 24, 93; יסד 24, 82; ישׁר 94, 92; יתום 94, 82; כנור 81, 92; כסא 94, 93; כסיל 94, 92; כף 24, 81; מחשׁבה 94, 92; מים 81, 93; מרום 93, 92; משׂגב 48, 94; נבט 94, 92; נבל 81, 92; נהר (4) 24, 93; נחל (3) 82, 94; נפשׁ (4) 24, 94; נקי 24, 94; עבר 48, 81; עול 82, 92; עין 94, 92; עליון 24, 81; עם (6) 81, 94; ענה 94, 81; פּנה 24, 82; פּעל (5) 93, 92; צבאות 24, 48; קול 81, 93; ראה (3) 48, 94; רנן 81, 92; רעה/רע/רעע 82; שׂגב 48, 92; שׂוב (4) 81, 94; שׂם 48, 92; תבל 24, 93; תנה 48, 92; שׂמח (4) 94, 92; מעט 94, 81.

[7] Omitted from the calculations were the words listed in n. 2 and הנה, כל, סלה, מאד, מעט, היה, אלהים, יהוה (the last two are too frequent to add information). A different choice of words would alter the values in the table. Unless the choice diverged radically from those made here, the effect on the tabulated values would be small and the overall trends would remain the same.

ence between two small texts sharing vocabulary is greater than that between two large texts with the same number of common words. Hence the proportion by which a small psalm overlaps a larger one is of more consequence than the absolute number of common words.[8] The percentages indicate this proportion.

The information in this table represents an advance over that in the previous two. Figures of this sort are frequently used to support an argument that one psalm is more closely associated with another than with a third, for example, that Ps 48 is closer to Ps 24 than Ps 92 is to Ps 24. However, limitations remain on the usefulness of this data, limitations that are often not stated. These revolve around the significance of the number of common words or their proportions. Simply stated, the issue is whether, for example, the 27% overlap between Ps 24 and 48 (or the 7% between Ps 24 and 92) represents a significant degree of overlap (or, to the contrary, of disjunction). This is both a comparative and a statistical question. To attempt an answer, one might calculate the overlap between every pair of psalms in the Psalter, and on this basis determine whether 27% is high and 7% low. Such calculations are tedious and open to theoretical objections.[9] They are not attempted here.[10] One might stay within the confines of the Tamid Psalms and ask whether 27% is high and 7% is low, given the twenty-one values calculated in the table. A scientifically correct answer to this question requires involved statistical calculations, and will not be pursued further here.

Recognizing the limitations just stated, one can hazard some heuristic observations on the basis of the table that motivates further detailed discussion beyond tabulation of frequencies and considers semantic issues as well. In relative terms, greater connections on the verbal level are in evidence between the pairs of psalms, Ps 24–48,

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[8] The word counts for the psalms (with the same omissions as in n. 7) are Ps 24: 41; Ps 48: 64; Ps 82: 37; Ps 94: 93; Ps 81: 37; Ps 93: 29; Ps 92: 68.

[9] For example, there is the theoretical question of what psalms should be chosen as the sample space – all the Psalter, or all extant psalms (in the Bible, including intertestamental literature, etc.), or some other subset, such as all but individual laments (or some other genre that does not appear in the Tamid Psalms), or all psalms mentioned in rabbinical writings, and so on. This difficulty is one reason for operating only within the set of seven psalms.

[10] As an illustration percentages for three psalms that are often associated are: between Ps 1 and 2: 8%; between Ps 9 and 10: 26%; between Ps 147 and 148: 28%. This suggests (but does not prove) that a percentage in the high 20s indicates a connection between two psalms.

82–94, 81–93 and to a lesser extent 94–81. In other words, several pairs of consecutive psalms in the weekday sequence 24–48–82–94–81–93 are joined by common vocabulary. This suggests that the psalm sequence might flow through the week. As Ps 92 and 24 have the least proportion of common vocabulary of any pair of psalms, the transition from the Sabbath to the first day is more abrupt. The Tamid Psalms appear to have the character of a repeated linear sequence rather than a continual cycle. Of the weekday psalms, Ps 24 shows a consistently high proportional overlap with the other five. On the level of vocabulary, Ps 24 prefigures the other weekday psalms. There is also a strong link between Ps 24 and 93. These observations motivate the conjecture that the weekday psalms form a block bounded by Ps 24 and 93 and to some extent stand apart from Ps 92.

Psalm 94 (and to a lesser extent Ps 82) shows a large overlap with Ps 92. In this sense, the middle of the week balances the Sabbath. Psalm 94 shares a high proportion of vocabulary in common with Ps 93. The implication of this is not clear.[11] Psalms 81 and 82 also share vocabulary. They are both attributed to Asaph and this allows the overlap to be explained as the result of a compositional technique maintained by this "guild."[12]

These observations based on common vocabulary do not prove structure, connectedness or division, but are indications of points that might be scrutinized more carefully. Three areas stand out: connections between consecutive Tamid Psalms, the relations between Ps 24 and the other psalms, and the relations between Ps 92 and the others. The next section deals with these areas in more detail. It also addresses the second objection to an analysis based solely on word counts by including semantic considerations as part of a broader and more differentiated range of ways in which Tamid Psalms intersect and relate to each other.

2. *Connections between Tamid Psalms*

Connections among Tamid Psalms as co-texts in the same composition are reflected by the incidence of similar elements in two or

[11] In the Psalter, Ps 93–100 exhibit a high degree of connection. The overlaps between Ps 93 and 94 may in part be a reflection of this. See David M. Howard, "Psalm 94 among the Kingship-of-Yhwh Psalms," *CBQ* 61 (1999): 667–85.

[12] On the Psalms of Asaph and guilds, see ch. 3, n. 80.

more psalms. The presence (or absence) of such common elements has implications for the interpretation of the psalms. In this section, selected pairs of Tamid Psalms are examined for evidence of links created by elements held in common between them. The investigation is divided into the three areas identified by the word counts of the previous section: connections between consecutive psalms, connections between Ps 24 and another psalm, and connections between Ps 92 and another psalm.

Common elements may manifest in various guises. Vocabulary furnishes the most basic example. The incidence of the same word or root in two psalms creates a link between them at least on a formal or structural level. Synonyms also form links, but on a semantic level, and the introduction of semantic considerations motivates the extension to other forms of commonality, such as that of motifs, agents and characterization. These aspects will be considered here.[13]

Connections created by the presence of common elements are not all of the same type. The situation is complex; the simplest case of common vocabulary can be used to illustrate this. A word may bind two texts together on one level, yet separate them on another. For example, קום appears in both Ps 82 and Ps 92. In Ps 82:8, it describes an action of God desired by the speaking voice, but in Ps 92:12, a hostile, reprehensible activity of the wicked. The connection established by the word is purely formal. There is no link on the level of content or motif, rather, a tension is set up between the two psalms at this point. The word has a disjunctive effect. At the other extreme, a word may function in essentially the same way with the same meanings and implications in two psalms, for example, צור, as a divine epithet, in Ps 94:22 and 92:16. Such a word forms a strong connection between two psalms.

Two intermediate situations also occur. Sometimes the same word (or concept) may appear in two psalms but in different, disjoint contexts. The logical or semantic connection between the two appearances is weak. For example חסד appears in both Ps 48:10 and 92:3. In the former, it is something to be pondered, in the latter, proclaimed. The two activities are to a large extent disjoint. The result of the juxtaposition of the two psalms is a synthesis of both ideas.

[13] Other forms of commonality are possible, in particular, stylistic or grammatical features.

The implication of such a connection for the structure or composition of the collection is unclear. It certainly opens up possibilities for creative interpretation, but could have been generated by the random juxtaposition of texts. Another case occurs frequently. A common element may appear in two psalms in overlapping, but not identical ways. One psalm may include a motif or word that is present in the other, but then add more to it in a way that develops or expands on the first. For example, the term רשׁע appears in Ps 82:2, 4 and 92:8. In Ps 82, the wicked oppress the poor with the support of some angels who are sentenced to death. In Ps 92, the motif of oppression by the wicked is also present and, what is more, they are also under a death sentence. Thus Ps 92 overlaps and develops the motif found in Ps 82. A second example is provided by the motif of worship on Mt. Zion in Ps 24 and 48 (Ps 24:4; Ps 48 passim). The prototypical mechanism for the production of such a link would be the conscious intention on the part of the collectors to expound a concept over two psalms.

These distinctions in the nature of the connections established by common elements are not objective, clear-cut categories. They illustrate the complexity of the situation and provide starting points from which to evaluate the evidence for connections and their implications. In this regard, one further consideration – so obvious it may be overlooked – must be mentioned. As well as connections between psalms it is also necessary to review points of disjunction. Two psalms may have relatively little in common, or even contain elements that are in opposition.

So far, the focus has been on identifying links between psalms. There is another aspect to the function of such links. Common elements create bridges over which implications for interpretation can travel. The use of a word in two psalms allows for the transfer of its context from one psalm to another, that is, for the interpretation of one psalm to influence another. These implications also need to be considered.

Some previous work on the relations between the Tamid Psalms has been done by Yehudah A. Liebreich.[14] His short paper touched

[14] Yehudah A. Liebreich, "The Psalms of the Levites for the Days of the Week (in Hebrew)," *ErIsr* 3 (1954): 170–73.

on several issues associated with the Tamid Psalms including the three issues studied in this section. Liebreich claimed that Ps 24 was the key to understanding the arrangement of the psalms and the meaning of the choices made by the compiler, and to this end he examined the connections between this psalm and the others. He also considered the relationships between successive psalms in the cycle and between Ps 92 and the other psalms. Leibreich's arguments are open to three criticisms: (1) he presented only evidence for connection and did not consider those elements that might indicate disjunction; (2) he relied almost entirely on keywords, which he tended to assume had the same semantic content at each occurrence; and (3) in several cases, he used indirect connections with Ps 24.[15] In sum, Liebreich did not attempt to evaluate the nature or strength of the connections he identified.

2.1 *The Weekly Sequence*

Psalms 24 and 48[16]

In addition to common vocabulary, these psalms share several motifs, most notably in the characterization of Yahweh. In both psalms Yahweh is described as king and given the epithet Sabaoth.[17] Divine influence extends over the whole earth (24:1; 48:11, cf. 48:3). The military superiority of Yahweh is also a motif in the two psalms. In Ps 24, there is merely the assertion that Yahweh is a powerful warrior (24:8, 10). Psalm 48, on the other hand, contains a description of a victory of Yahweh and expands on God's military capabilities (48:5–8, 4, 13–15). The description is surprising, however, inasmuch

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[15] Liebreich, "Psalms of the Levites," 171–72. According to him, Ps 24 links to 48 via ארץ, הר, מלך, צבאות, כון, צדק; Ps 24 to 82 via the threat to the foundations of the world (root יסד) and the opposing descriptions of the righteous in Ps 24 and the evil doers in Ps 82; Ps 24 to 94 indirectly through the close connection of Ps 94 with 82 and also on the grounds that the creator is the judge; Ps 24 to 81 through the use of the terms עז and יעקב, but more importantly through the connection between Ps 94 and 81 (especially עם); and Ps 24 to 93 through מלך, נהר, ים, עז, קדש, and the greatness of God. For Ps 24 and 92, see nn. 39 and 61. Liebreich did not consider all the common vocabulary.

[16] Significant common vocabulary: ארץ, דור, הר, כון, לב, מלא, מלך, עולם, קדש, צבאות, צדק. Three of these, לב (24:4; 48:14), מלא (24:1; 48:11), and צדק (24:5; 48:11) do not appear in the context of the same motif.

[17] The root מלך is only found in three Tamid Psalms, 24:7–10, 48:3 and 93:1. צבאות occurs at 24:10 and 48:9.

as Yahweh is not presented as an active warrior, but as a passive force. The divine presence itself is overwhelming, without the need to strike a blow. In keeping with this, security flows not from Yahweh's skill at war, but God's fortress-like presence. Because of their juxtaposition in the Tamid Psalms, Ps 48 can be seen as an interpretive expansion of the claim first made in Ps 24 that Yahweh is a warrior (גבר). In both psalms, Yahweh is described as establishing (כון) something – in Ps 24:2, the world, in Ps 48:9, Zion. Psalm 48 develops images of Yahweh as king and warrior found also in Ps 24 and also introduces another role, that of judge (שׁפט, 48:12). This role dominates in the following psalms.

The two psalms are set in the same location, Zion.[18] As is the case for Yahweh as warrior, the description of Zion is greatly amplified in Ps 48. In the discussion of Ps 24 it was suggested that the move from v. 2 to 3 is from creation in general to the epitome of creation, namely, Zion. The priority of Zion is more explicit in Ps 48. Zion in Ps 48 is not merely the place where one encounters Yahweh; it is, to a great extent, the embodiment of Yahweh on earth. The shift from Ps 24 to Ps 48 continues the movement started in Ps 24:3–4.

A motif of worship is found in both psalms. Psalm 48 can be seen as developing this motif. In both psalms, human agents appear as worshippers. In Ps 24, the faithful are called to travel to Zion to worship Yahweh, while the portrayal of worship in Zion is a dominant interest of Ps 48. Ps 24 contains hints of an encounter with Yahweh, while Ps 48 describes this encounter, not only as an experience for the faithful, but also for the hostile kings.[19]

In summary, Ps 48 develops motifs introduced in Ps 24. This development occurs both at a static or descriptive level – Ps 48 says more about Yahweh, Zion and worship than is found in Ps 24 – and at a dynamic or temporal level – Ps 24 foreshadows an encounter with Yahweh and Ps 48 describes such encounters.

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[18] There is some common vocabulary associated with this site (קדשׁ, הר, עולם, Ps 24:3, 7, 9; Ps 48:2, 3, 9, 12, 15).

[19] On the level of vocabulary, only two words reflect this common motif of worship and neither of these is particularly central to the concept. In Ps 24:6, the worshippers are called דור and in Ps 48:14, this word applies to the next generation, who will eventually come to experience Yahweh in Zion. In Ps 24:6, the faithful are promised צדקה, and Ps 48:11 attests to the possession of צדק by Yahweh.

Psalms 48 and 82[20]

Psalm 82 is a short psalm that concerns itself entirely with a vision of judgment in the heavenly court. The differences between Ps 48, where Yahweh is a passive protector closely identified with Zion, and Ps 82 are quite marked. In Ps 82, motifs of praise and worship are absent, indeed the address to Yahweh in v. 8 is redolent with anxiety; Yahweh is active against heavenly delinquents, not primarily resisting terrestrial foes; human agents appear only indirectly as the objects of persecution; and the shaky state of the earth (82:5) contradicts the stability of Zion (48:9; cf. 24:2). However, four links to Ps 48 may be noted. First Ps 48 contains a brief reference to God's capacity to rule (48:11, 12), which is the predominant motif in Ps 82.[21] Second, the two psalms have congruent settings: Ps 48 is set in the earthly city of Zion and the Temple, Ps 82 in their heavenly counterpart.[22] Thirdly, both psalms employ a stylistic trope connecting understanding with locomotion and vision.[23] In Ps 48, the sight of Zion inspires belief and trust in the group touring the city (48:13–15, cf. v. 4). In Ps 82, the agents do not understand, and this statement is paralleled by the observation that they wander in darkness, a condition incompatible with sight (82:5). Finally, both psalms show Yahweh in opposition to something else (kings or angels), an element missing from Ps 24.

Despite differences, Ps 82 is a development of one particular aspect of Ps 48, that Yahweh rules in Zion, through presentation of a vision of a relevant incident in Yahweh's leadership.

Psalms 82 and 94[24]

These two are the most closely linked pair in the sequence of Tamid Psalms. Not only are there overlaps in motifs and vocabulary, there is also a high level of continuity of thought from one psalm to the

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[20] Common vocabulary: ארץ, ידע, צדק, שׁפט.

[21] שׁפט is a keyword in Ps 82 (82:1, 2, 3, 8; cf. 48:12). צדק is also associated with this motif (48:11; 82:3).

[22] No common vocabulary points to this link.

[23] ידע is used in connection with this trope. It use is central in Ps 82:5, but peripheral in Ps 48:4.

[24] Common vocabulary: אדם, אל, אמר, ארח, בין, גוי, ידע, יתום, מוט, נחל, נתא, קום, צדק, רשׁע, שׁפט. The words אדם (82:7; 94:10), אמר (82:7; 94:7) and ידע (82:5; 94:11) occur in different contexts.

next. Psalm 82 presents a vision of God judging unjust practices in heaven and closes with a human cry to implement this judgment on earth. Psalm 94 opens with a similar plea for God to render judgment on earth and develops this through descriptions of oppression and hope.

Yahweh in both psalms is cast in the role of a ruling judge rising to pronounce sentence on wrongdoers.[25] Actions of the wrongdoers have resulted in the oppression of a group characterized by terms indicative of helplessness (82:3, 4; 94:5, 6).[26] In Ps 94, this group is further identified as God's people (94:5, 14).[27] The oppressors are called the wicked (רשׁע), along with other terms (82:2; 94:2–4, 8, 16).[28] They have a defective perception of reality.[29] Different groups stand under judgment in each psalm. In Ps 82, the heavenly supporters of the wicked are condemned, while in Ps 94 it is the wicked themselves whose condemnation is called for. The condemnation is the same in each case – destruction (Ps 82:7; 94:23). The two psalms are thus complementary. They share the theme of retribution and taken together, they portray the total destruction of wickedness under the judgment of God, first in heaven, then on earth.

Stylistic features also bind the psalms together. The close of Ps 82 and the opening of Ps 94 are similar.[30] In several cases, a motif or agent introduced in Ps 82 reappears in Ps 94 in a more closely specified or particularized form. In Ps 82:8, God is the possessor (נחל) of all the peoples (גוים), while in Ps 94:5, 14, God has a particular group (עם) as a special possession (נחל) to whom God is faithful. As for the peoples, God remains their instructor, whose instruction is a blessing (94:10–12); the claim to ownership of all peoples in Ps 82 is refined in Ps 94 into instruction for all, and ownership and protection of a certain group who heed instruction. In Ps 82:5, the

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[25] The root שׁפט occurs four times in Ps 82 and once in Ps 94:2. Several verbs convey the nuance of the ruler rising to act in 82:1, 8 and 94:2, 16. Of these קום is the only one in both psalms, although נשׂא refers to the activity of ruling, either by Yahweh or the wicked in 82:2; 94:2. Both psalms refer to God as אל in their opening lines. The place of judgment is ארץ in 82:8 and 94:2.

[26] Only יתום is in common.

[27] Statements in both psalms imply that צדק applies to this group (Ps 82:4; 94:15).

[28] Only רשׁע is in both psalms.

[29] בין occurs in 82:5 and 94:8.

[30] Both call on God to rise in judgment. Lexical links are: אל/אלהים, נקמות/קומה and שׁפט + ארץ.

world totters (מוט); in Ps 94:18, it is a particular human who is destabilized. In Ps 82:3–4, God endorses help for the group of helpless; in Ps 94:16–19, God's role as helper is testified to. The motif of understanding that appears briefly in Ps 82:5 is the subject of a longer development in Ps 94:8–13.

Psalms 94 and 81[31]

Both Ps 94 and 81 concern relief from a painful situation afflicting God's people. Psalm 94 is an impassioned cry for help that leads to the assurance that God will intervene. Psalm 81 is, in a sense, God's answer to such a plea. The reality of the existence of a situation of oppression is acknowledged, but a different perspective is given for the cause of this situation. Affliction is due to the failure of God's people to maintain worship. The God of retribution invoked to rise as judge and ruler (שׁפט) of earth (94:1–2) has given Israel an instruction (שׁפט, 81:6, cf. 94:12) – worship – which is not heeded, and, as a consequence, retribution falls on God's people, not on their enemies. Whereas in Ps 94 it is the oppressors who spurn God and lack understanding, in Ps 81 Israel itself exhibits these traits (81:12–14, cf. 94:7–8). Both psalms contain testimony to God's saving activity in the past. In Ps 94, this takes the form of the personal testimony of the speaking voice (vv. 16–19), while in Ps 81 it is drawn from the historical memory of the nation (vv. 6–7). While Ps 94 calls on God to act thus again, Ps 81 explains God's inaction. All these links create a developmental continuity of thought between the two psalms.

The juxtaposition of the two psalms creates a secondary hermeneutical link that supports the identification of the oppressors in Ps 94 as foreign nations, just as the enemies in Ps 81 are foreign nations, whose archetype is Egypt.

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[31] Fourteen significant words are in common: אל, ארץ, חק, ידע, יום, יעקב, לב, נשׂא, עם, ענה, שׁוב, שׁמע, שׁפט, צור. Of these words, four are used in a similar sense in the two psalms: ארץ is land controlled or conquered by Yahweh (94:2; 81:6, 11), אלהי יעקב is a title for Yahweh (94:7; 81:2, cf. 5), עם is God's people (94:5, 8, 14; 81:9, 12, 15), and שׁוב appears in the context of the destruction of enemies (81:8; 94:2, 23, cf. 15); five are used in contrasting ways: אל is Yahweh (94:1) or a foreign god (81:10), יום are troubled days (94:13) or festival days (81:4), לב indicates a righteous or a stubborn attitude (94:15; 81:13), נשׂא refers to the uplifting of judgment or praise (94:2; 81:6), שׁמע is something that Yahweh does, but Israel ignores (94:9; 81:6, 9, 12, 14); two create secondary connections: צור suggests that the rock in 81:17 is Yahweh the refuge (94:22), שׁפט is explained below (94:2; 81:5); two

Psalms 81 and 93[32]

Two motifs shared by these two psalms stand out. Both psalms contain a motif of praise of God. This opens Ps 81 and dominates Ps 93. Both psalms also refer to the commandments of God. In Ps 81, the commandments, summed up in the command to worship Yahweh, figure prominently (81:5, 6, 10, 11, 14). Failure to uphold these rulings has resulted in the difficult situation of the people. Psalm 93 also contains a short reference to the rulings of God that indicates their continuing validity (93:5).[33]

The two points of contact amplify the contrast between the subject matter of the psalms. Psalm 93 depicts only worship of God, carried out, as has been argued in chapter 3, by non-human agents who are thereby obeying God's commands, while in Ps 81 the humans who ought to know better are accused of rejecting obedience and refusing to worship.

A clue to another interpretative interaction can be found in the common use of the root עז (81:3; 93:1). In Ps 81, this is one of the two descriptive attributes applied to Yahweh (the other, "God of Jacob," links God with the people). In the context of that psalm, this attribute is demonstrated by the historical reminiscence of the defeat of Egypt, which is then paralleled in the conditional promise to defeat present enemies. In Ps 93, God's strength is also praised (93:1). Justification for this praise might be found in the succeeding assertions concerning the stability of the world and the permanence of God's place in heaven (93:1–2). Oppression in Egypt can be viewed as an example of the destabilization of creation, thwarted by God's action and so included under the general purview of praise

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appear in lines whose translation is opaque: חק (94:20; 81:5), ידע (94:11; 81:6); and one has a double meaning: ענה (94:5; 81:8).

[32] Seven common terms were noted: יום, מים, נשׂא, עתה, עז, עולם, קול. Although this is a high proportion of the vocabulary of the shorter Ps 93, it is only 9% of the vocabulary of Ps 81. Four of the terms appear in ways that do not create primary or substantive connections. Three terms are used in a generic sense: יום is a festival day in Ps 81:4, but part of an idiom for eternity in Ps 93:5; מים refers to a place in 81:8 and an agent in 93:3, 4; קול is a generic term for sound, either the voice of God (81:12) or that of the rivers (93:3, 4); עולם is used in a verse whose translation is obscure in 81:16.

[33] The root עוד (81:6, 9; 93:5) is employed in both psalms for God's commandments. It is one of several such terms used in Ps 81.

in Ps 93.[34] Since the current oppression is presented as a parallel to that of Egypt in Ps 81, it follows that Ps 93 also declares its relief. Consequently, in the transition from Ps 81 to Ps 93 one can find the seeds of a (miraculous) resolution of the situation of oppression depicted in Ps 81 and the inauguration of the universal power and beneficence of Yahweh.

Psalms 93 and 92[35]

A motif of praise dominates this pair of psalms. Psalm 93 is given over entirely to praise of Yahweh. Praise by humans permeates Ps 92. Praise is declared to be the duty of the righteous. At the start of Ps 92, the speaking voice declares the appropriateness of praise, before commencing on a long section of personal praise of Yahweh. Taken together, Ps 93 and 92 show the human and non-human realms praising Yahweh, in effect, the whole creation. In regard to the motif of praise, Ps 93 and 92 are complementary.

This psalm also cancels out the negative assessment of human praise found in Ps 81. In Ps 92, praise is now performed by human beings on the basis of a deliverance provided by Yahweh. The removal of oppression hinted at in the transition from Ps 81 to Ps 93 is confirmed in Ps 92 by the rescue of the righteous and their acts of praise.

Up to this point in the sequence of Tamid Psalms, only links between consecutive psalms have been discussed. For Ps 92, however, it seems more natural to include the two preceding psalms (at least) and consider the process of development from Ps 81, through Ps 93 to Ps 92. The motifs of oppression and lack of worship in Ps 81 are first reversed in Ps 93 on a cosmic scale and without explicit reference to humans, and then in Ps 92 for the human world. Psalm 93 hints at resolution of the dire situation depicted in Ps 81, but, by not making this explicit, stretches out the drama, so that the climax can occur on the Sabbath day.

Psalms 93 and 92 also share two other motifs. First, they have the same setting, namely, heaven and the Temple.[36] Second, a motif

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[34] Terence E. Fretheim, "The Plagues As Ecological Signs of Historical Disaster," *JBL* 110 (1991): 391–92.

[35] Common vocabulary: אמן, בית, מרום, עולם.

[36] Several terms are used for the setting, however they are the only two of the daily psalms to use מרום (93:4; 92:9) and בית (93:5; 92:14).

of permanence pervades both psalms.[37] In Ps 93, permanence is a primary attribute of Yahweh (93:2), which transfers to other things associated with the deity (the throne, the world, the laws, the house, 93:1, 2, 5). In Ps 92, Yahweh's eternal character is also asserted (92:9, cf. v. 3), and this everlasting state has flowed on to a class of human beings, the righteous, who praise Yahweh and dwell forever in Yahweh's courts (92:13–15). Any form of longevity is denied to those who opposed Yahweh (92:8, 10).

Psalms 92 and 24[38]

Psalms 92 and 24 exhibit the least degree of connection of any pair of consecutive Tamid Psalms. Common to both is a setting in the Temple and a motif of encounter with Yahweh. Psalm 92 describes the continual presence of the righteous in the Temple, while Ps 24 anticipates the encounter with Yahweh there for the faithful. A reading that moves from Ps 92 to Ps 24 does not flow well; Ps 92 does not prepare for Ps 24, except that the vision of the blessed state of the righteous in the Temple in Ps 92 provides enticement for the faithful to travel up to Zion. It seems more natural to read Ps 24 first, as preparing for Ps 92, that is, those who at the start of the week seek Yahweh and his צדקה by the Sabbath dwell eternally in the presence of God as צדיק, having had the powerful and glorious king remove all threats.[39]

This examination of the weekly sequence of Tamid Psalms has shown there are strong connections between almost every pair of

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[37] Several terms are used to indicate permanence and its opposite in the two psalms, but only עולם and the root אמן are in common (93:2, 5; 92:3, 9).

[38] Only three significant words were noted: עולם, קום, צדק. עולם is used of Yahweh in 92:9 and the gates in 24:7, 9; קום is used of the evildoers in 92:12 and the pilgrims in 24:3; while the root צדק describes a reward in 24:5 and a class of people in 92:13.

[39] In a similar vein, Liebreich argued that Ps 24 and 92 were complementary in that Ps 24 lists the traits of the righteous and Ps 92 their reward ("Psalms of the Levites," 172–73). He further suggested that Ps 24 was appropriate for the start of the week for two reasons: first, since the hope of a blessing in Ps 24:6 captured well the aspirations of a typical Israelite at the start of the week; and second, since the sixfold presence of the divine name in Ps 24 matched the six days of creation (171). The first of these reasons is charmingly romantic; the second problematic, as he restricts his comments only to Ps 24 and 92 and presents no consistent approach to the counts of the divine name in each of the seven psalms. Why are there two occurrences in Ps 48, nine in Ps 94 and five in Ps 93? See n. 61.

consecutive Tamid Psalms, with the exception of the pair Ps 92–24. While some links exist on a formal level via common vocabulary, the more important connections are found in shared motifs. Common motifs may or may not be associated with common vocabulary.[40] In several cases, an idea introduced in one psalm, possibly only briefly, is greatly developed in the following psalm. Examples include the pairs Ps 24–48, with the motif of encounter with Yahweh or the pre-eminence of Zion; Ps 48–82, with the motif of judgment; and Ps 82–94, with the cry to judge the earth.

This section concentrated on pairs of psalms; yet the sequence Ps 81–93–92 can be treated more adequately as a triplet of consecutive psalms. Psalm 92 connects with Ps 81 through motifs of praise and the reversal of motifs of human shortcomings and oppression. Ps 93 intervenes between them and presents imagery of cosmic (non-human) praise without disobedience. It provides a nexus through which the motif of praise and the reversals pass. In this way, it helps secure Ps 92 to the other psalms. By delaying the explicit picture of resolution of the difficulties found in Ps 82, 94 and 81, Ps 93 also increases the dramatic force of the vision in Ps 92.

The weakest connection is the one between Ps 92 and 24. In fact, it is more natural to regard Ps 24 as preceding Ps 92 (even though five other psalms separate them). This has important consequences for the interpretation of the Tamid Psalms. Just as one day follows another, so in the ideal liturgical practice of the Temple, one daily psalm followed another in a never ending sequence. The break between Ps 92 and Ps 24 indicates that this never ending sequence is not to be viewed as an eternal cycle, but as the infinite repetition of a linear sequence of seven, with a beginning, Ps 24, and an end, Ps 92. On a diagram, the Tamid Psalms would not be represented as seven points on a circle that is traversed eternally, but as seven points on a line segment, with the segment itself repeated. Such an image is consistent with an understanding of the Sabbath day as the conclusion of the week.

The semantic continuity between consecutive psalms creates an impression of a smooth flow through the week and a development of thought from Ps 24 to Ps 92. The very nature of a linear sequence

[40] For Ps 24–48 and 82–94, the common motifs include most of the common vocabulary, whereas for Ps 94–81 and 81–93, a large proportion of the common words are not easily joined to common motifs.

draws attention to its first and last members, to Ps 24 and Ps 92 in this case. In what ways does Ps 24 serve as an introduction to the Tamid Psalms, and Ps 92 as a conclusion? These matters will be examined in the following sections.

2.2 *Psalm 24 as an Introduction to the Week*

The first section of a literary work may prepare for what follows in many different ways – it may introduce the characters, describe the setting, define key concepts or terms, allude to the theme, or express questions with which the work will be occupied. It also needs to elicit a sympathetic response from the audience and provide an entry point for them into the world of the text. Psalm 24 is the first of the Tamid Psalms. Which roles from this abundance of possibilities does it perform?

Two have already been noted. A consistently high overlap in vocabulary between Ps 24 and the other weekday psalms was observed. As well, connections with Ps 48 and Ps 92 have been examined, and from this the conclusion drawn that Ps 24 should be treated as the first psalm of the week. This section is primarily concerned with scrutinizing the connections between Ps 24 and the other weekday psalms in order to see how closely Ps 24 prefigures the motifs, characters and other semantic elements found in them, that is, to see in what ways Ps 24 introduces the Tamid Psalms as a whole.

Liebreich argued that Ps 24 served as a key to understanding the arrangement of the following Tamid Psalms and the interpretation of the whole. In support of this claim, he identified various elements in Ps 24 connected with each of the following psalms. The present investigation explores a greater range of potential links and considers differences as well as similarities.

The relations between Ps 24 and Ps 48, 92 were discussed in section 2.1.

Psalm 24 and 82[41]

Despite lexical connections established between these two psalms by shared vocabulary, elements that tend to separate the psalms on a

[41] Common vocabulary: ארץ, יסד, נשׂא, פנה, קום, צדק. Of these, פנה is used in different idioms in the two psalms (24:6; 82:2).

semantic level are dominant. Upward movement, characteristic of worshippers in Ps 24 and not of God, is predicated of God and the wicked in Ps 82.[42] In Ps 82, Yahweh is depicted as judge; there is no recollection of the warrior epithets of Ps 24.[43] The root צדק is used in the context of receiving in Ps 24:5, but of giving in Ps 82:3. Both psalms present Yahweh as owner of all (24:1; 82:8), but this is a rather banal claim when made on behalf of the supreme deity of a religion. There is a degree of tension between the comments on the establishment of the earth (24:2; 82:5, cf. 48:9) in that something established by the supreme deity ought not be in a shaky state.[44] A contrast exists between the righteous in Ps 24:4, who do not honor worthless things, and the divine beings in Ps 82:2, who favor the wicked.

One primary link can be found in the setting of the two psalms. Both psalms center on activities taking place in the Temple, viewed as the composite of both the earthly building and the heavenly palace. In Ps 24, various parties come to the Temple for an encounter with Yahweh. In Ps 82, an encounter, albeit not pleasant for the divine beings, is described. Overall the relation between Ps 24 and 82 is better characterized as one of independence and supplementation, rather than natural development or progression. Contrary to Liebreich's position, Psalm 24 does not directly prepare the hearer for Ps 82.

Psalms 24 and 94[45]

As was the case with Ps 82, Ps 94, which has a strong emphasis on judgment on the wicked, is largely disjoint from Ps 24. Some points of contact do exist. Both psalms contain the motif of an encounter with Yahweh – in Ps 24 it is anticipated and in Ps 94 requested. Both psalms are set in Zion.[46] Both psalms contain a group of

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[42] נשׂא, 24:4, 5, 7, 9; 82:2; קום, 24:3; 82:8.

[43] Ps 48 with both military and judicial images, forms a link between the two psalms.

[44] Common words are the root יסד and ארץ.

[45] Nine words or roots are in common: ארץ, גבר, יעקב, לב, נפשׁ, נקי, נשׂא, קום, צדק. Of these, three are used in similar ways: יעקב (a title for God 24:6; 94:7), לב (of the righteous, 24:4; 94:15), נפשׁ (human will, 24:4; 94:19, cf. 94:17, 21) and two are independent: ארץ (24:1; 94:2), גבר (24:8; 94:12).

[46] The setting for Ps 24 is clear, but not so explicit for Ps 94. It can be identified, however, by vocabulary and interactions with other Tamid Psalms. Four terms allude to Zion. The term צור (usually translated "rock" or "mountain") is used in

people who are innocent (נקי) and allied with God, but in Ps 94, this group is being persecuted by another, the wicked, and this latter company is missing from Ps 24. However, conflicting elements are also present. In Ps 94, Yahweh rises to judge (94:2, 16) whereas in Ps 24, upward movement is restricted to worshippers; the root צדק refers to an agent who receives in Ps 94, but to what is received in Ps 24; the personal testimony of Ps 94:16–22 has no counterpart in Ps 24 (in fact, 94:22 is closer to Ps 48 than Ps 24); and warrior imagery is not used for Yahweh. Thus there is little evidence for a direct or explanatory link between Ps 24 and 94.

Psalms 24 and 81[47]

The connections between Ps 24 and 81 are stronger than those in the preceding two cases. Some common vocabulary is used in a consistent way in the two psalms. In Ps 81, words connoting upward motion occur only in the context of improving the relationship with

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Ps 94:22 as a divine name. In the tradition it can also allude to Jerusalem and the Temple as the place where Yahweh was revealed as protector, as well as calling to mind a more concrete connection with the Temple mount and Temple rock. A clear example of this allusion is found in Ps 27:4–6 where the Temple is the place where the owner of the speaking voice dwells, worships Yahweh and receives protection, safe on a high rock (צור), cf. Ps 61:3; see further Staffan Olofsson, *God is my Rock: A Study of Translation Technique and Theological Exegesis in the Septuagint* (ConBOT 31; Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1990), 36, 42–43; D. Sperling, "Mount, Mountain," *IDBSup* 608–9. Similarly, מחסה in Ps 94:22 could describe the Temple in its role as a place of refuge, as also might משגב in Ps 94:21; see Olofsson, *God is my Rock*, 63–68. Fourthly, the term throne, כסא, which is applied in Ps 94:20 to the power of the wicked also recalls its opposite, namely Yahweh's throne, located in the heavenly Temple. As for interactions with other Tamid Psalms, in light of the close connection, discussed previously, between Ps 94 and its predecessor, Ps 82, it is likely that the setting of Ps 82 in the Temple would also be assumed as the place where Yahweh gives judgment in Ps 94. Links exist with other Tamid Psalms. Psalm 92, which imagines the righteous dwelling in the Temple precincts, also contain the word צור as a title for Yahweh. (See below on the links between Ps 92 and 94.) Psalm 48 itself provides an excellent example of the identification of Yahweh as refuge with the physical site of Jerusalem. The allusion to God's radiance (Ps 94:1) recalls the magnificent vision of Yahweh in Ps 93, which is set in the Temple, and also provides another indirect connection to Ps 24 where a vision of Yahweh in glory is anticipated. (See below on the links between Ps 24 and 93.)

[47] Nine roots form verbal connections between these two psalms: ארץ, יעקב, כף, לב, מלא, עולם, עז, עלה, נשׂא. Five of these are used in independent ways in the two psalms: ארץ (the world, 24:1; Egypt, 81:6, 11), כף (idiom, 24:4; work, 81:7), לב (faith, 24:4; resistance 81:13), עולם (lifespan of gates, 24:7, 10; punishment of enemies, 81:16), מלא (inhabitants, 24:1; filling mouth, 81:11). יעקב and עז appear as epithets for Yahweh (24:6, 8; 81:2, 5).

Yahweh, a sense that is compatible with the usage in Ps 24.[48] The conduct in 81:10 is analogous to practices rejected in Ps 24:4, and the behavior described in Ps 81:12–14 is opposite to that encouraged in Ps 24:4. Moreover, in line with the assurance of Ps 24:5, it is promised in Ps 81 that reform and worship will lead to benefits (81:17). Both psalms contain a motif of seeking Yahweh (24:3, 81:14). Both encourage worship. One might imagine that what is done by the pilgrim of Ps 24 after the ascent to the Temple is the offering of praise and songs as at a festival (81:2–4). Since the speaking voice for a large part of Ps 81 is Yahweh, the implied setting for these verses would be the divine residence, the heavenly Temple. Its earthly counterpart is the central place where festivals are celebrated (81:2–4) and the shofar blown to mark their times. The Temple is also the place of encounter with God in the past and the seat of instruction in the present (cf. Ps 48).[49] Hence the Ps 24 and 81 share a common setting in Zion.[50] In summary, rather than being supplementary to

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[48] In 81:3, the instruction is to raise a song (נשׂא) in worship; in 81:6, the trip up from Egypt is a movement to worship of Yahweh.

[49] The psalm alludes to the giving of the Commandments in the story of Exodus. In the traditions, this occurred on Mt. Sinai/Horeb, not Mt. Zion. However, in the Second Temple period, the traditions associated with these two sites ran together. Both were instances of the sacred mountain of Yahweh and so both shared similar attributes derived from this conception, in particular as a place of encounter with God; see Julian Morgenstern, "Psalm 48," *HUCA* 16 (1941): 87. Moshe Weinfeld argues for the identification of Mt. Sinai and the Tent of Meeting (and hence of the Temple, which the Tabernacle prefigured) in the context of the proclamation of the Torah (cf. Lev 1:1; 7:38); see Weinfeld, "Sabbath, Temple and the Enthronement of the Lord – The Problem of the Sitz im Leben of Genesis 1:1–2:3," in *Mélanges bibliques et orientaux en l'honneur de M. Henri Cazelles* (ed. A. Caquot and M. Delcor; AOAT 212; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1981), 504–5. Details of the evolution of the tradition are not clear: Robert L. Cohn and Jon D. Levenson, for example, each reconstruct a development in which Mt. Zion "inherited" or "absorbed" the imagery and traditions associated with Mt. Sinai in such a way that the references to theophany and law-giving in Ps 81 would have evoked a connection with Zion, cf. Ps 48:12; 81:5 (Cohn even sees Mt. Zion almost as a rival and replacement of Mt. Sinai in some strands of the tradition); whereas Thomas B. Dozeman traces the opposite course, arguing that Horeb/Sinai replaced Zion as the place of encounter; see Cohn, *The Shape of Sacred Space: Four Biblical Studies* (*SR* 23; Chico, Ca.: Scholars Press, 1981), 57–61; Dozeman, *God on the Mountain: A Study of Redaction, Theology and Canon in Exodus 19–24* (SBLMS 37; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 35; Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Winston Press, 1985), esp. 206–9. A resolution is not needed here, only the observation that the allusion to the commandments and Exodus traditions does not conflict with the Temple as the setting of the psalm, as established by its opening verses.

[50] The term צור in Ps 81:17 could be interpreted as an allusion to Zion (see

or even disjoint from Ps 24, Ps 81 overlaps the psalm for the first day in many ways and develops motifs from it.

Psalms 24 and 93[51]

These two psalms have the second highest proportion of common vocabulary, suggesting, *a priori*, a close association between them and this is confirmed by a preponderance of common motifs. Both psalms reference the foundation of the world (24:1–2; 93:1).[52] In Ps 24, Yahweh's creation of the world is the reason that it can be declared his property. In Ps 93, the stability of creation is in view, as testimony to the power and permanence of Yahweh. In both psalms, the reference to creation also is part of a stylistic movement from the general to the particular, that is, from the totality of the world to that special place in it most closely associated with Yahweh, presented either as the holy mountain and sanctuary (24:3) or the throne (93:2). The location of Yahweh in the world is also a common element of these psalms, although different vocabulary is used to name it (24:3, 7, 9; 93:2a, 4c, 5b).[53] In Ps 24, this is the place to which the worshippers and Yahweh travel. In Ps 93, it is the implied location of the vision of Yahweh, which therefore renders it holy. In both psalms, Yahweh is described as powerful and magnificent (24:7–10; 93:1).[54] Psalm 24 promises an encounter with this magnificent deity, while the description in Ps 93 assumes such an encounter, if only in a vision.[55]

The attribution of kingship to Yahweh is part of the characterization of God in both psalms (24:7–10; 93:1).[56] In Ps 24 (and in Ps

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n. 46). This would be reinforced if one read חלב as "hill" in Ps 81:17. The epithet עוז in Ps 81:2 may also carry the connotation of "refuge," and this would establish another allusion to Zion as a place of protection (cf. Ps 48); see Olofsson, *God is my Rock*, 101.

[51] Nine words or roots are in common: ים, כון, מלך, נהר, נשׂא, עז, עולם, קדשׁ, תבל.

[52] Common words: כון, תבל.

[53] The psalms use the same attribute to describe this place, קדשׁ.

[54] These descriptions share only the root עז.

[55] In Ps 24, an encounter of some sort is anticipated in the call to the faithful to go up to worship and to the gates to prepare for the entry of the king. The term כבוד also contributes to the expectation of a vision of Yahweh. In the Pentateuch, כבוד defines that aspect of the godhead that is manifested to humans (Exod 16:7, 10; 24:16, 17; 33:18, 22; Lev 9:6, 23; Num 14:10, 22; 16:19; 17:7; 20:6; Deut 5:24). Read against this background, the closing verses of Ps 24 would trigger thoughts of a majestic manifestation of Yahweh, such as described in Ps 93.

[56] Root מלך.

48) there is no doubt that kingship is a property possessed by Yahweh, along with glory and might. This nuance flows through to the other Tamid Psalm that ascribes kingship to Yahweh. In other words, the assertion that Yahweh is king reinforces the translation of the opening line of Ps 93 as a stative, "Yahweh reigns."

Attributions of permanence are found in both psalms.[57] In Ps 24, imperishability is attached to the gates (24:7, 9). In Ps 93, it is a quality possessed primarily by Yahweh and secondarily by things derived from God, the world, the throne and the statutes (93:1e, 2a, 5a). In this case the implication might flow back from Ps 93 to Ps 24, that the gates derive their imperishability from their place in the city of Yahweh.

Another word held in common between the two psalms is the verb נשׂא. This word appears many times in Ps 24, as part of a motif of worship. In that context, the verb indicates an upward movement characteristic of the behavior of worshippers, whether they be people or gates.[58] In Ps 93:3, the verb is predicated of the rivers.[59] It was suggested earlier that rivers, waters and sea in Ps 93 are engaged in praise, not opposition to God. This interpretation harmonizes well with Ps 24. The rivers are not lifting up their voices to something empty, but to Yahweh (cf. 24:6, 7, 10).[60]

The major difference between the two psalms is the absence of human agents in Ps 93.

Does Ps 24 prefigure the other psalms and provide the means for their interpretation? The disjunctions between the pairs Ps 24–82 and 24–94 suggest that such a claim is exaggerated. Psalm 24 shares vocabulary with the other weekday psalms, but often this vocabulary is used in other psalms in ways not anticipated in Ps 24 or even contrary to it. Psalm 24 introduces the agents Yahweh, righteous people and the class of inanimate objects, but omits the wicked and

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[57] Root עולם, which is applied to the gates in Ps 24:7, 9, and Yahweh in Ps 93:2b. Several semantic equivalents appear in Ps 93.

[58] In Ps 24:4, נשׂא describes an action the righteous do not carry out; in Ps 24:6, it is associated with a benefit carried away by these faithful ones and in Ps 24:7, 10, an act encouraged of the gates in the presence of Yahweh, which is, in effect, another act of obeisance.

[59] נהר and ים are also agents that appear in both psalms.

[60] The rivers, like the righteous, bear something from Yahweh – the world (24:2, 5).

the characterization of Yahweh as judge. The setting, Zion, introduced in Ps 24, is maintained consistently throughout the rest of the Tamid Psalms. Likewise a motif of encounter with Yahweh, anticipated in Ps 24, is realized in different ways in the succeeding psalms. The importance of these two common elements of setting and encounter is discussed later when the question of a theme for the Tamid Psalms is considered.

Psalm 24 links most closely with Ps 93 and 48. The tie with Ps 48 is explicable as a connection between consecutive Tamid Psalms. The association with Ps 93 has structural implications. Given their position in the weekly cycle, it is hard not to view these two psalms as forming an inclusion that bounds the weekday psalms and separates them from the Sabbath Psalm, with which Ps 24 is only weakly connected. This structural features throws emphasis on the Sabbath Psalm.

2.3 *Connections between the Sabbath and the Weekday Psalms*

In Jewish religious belief and practice in the Second Temple period, the Sabbath day stood apart from other days of the week. In the primordial story of creation, it was the day after the completion of God's work, a day of inactivity, which in turn provided an archetype for devotion that became a hallmark of the religion in the Second Temple period.

The distinctiveness of the Sabbath is also reflected in the psalm for the Sabbath day, Ps 92. It is the only daily psalm so identified by superscription in the MT. In Ps 92, the insecurities of existence that cloud the other psalms are gone. All threats are removed and the righteous lead an idyllic life of praise in the presence of Yahweh. A break in the sequence of psalms between the Sabbath psalm and the weekday psalms has already been demonstrated; the links between Ps 92 and Ps 24 and between Ps 92 and Ps 93 are the weakest in the sequence. On the other hand, the undisputed priority of the Sabbath day in the week motivates questions about the relation of the Sabbath Psalm to the rest of the weekly cycle. To what extent does the content of Ps 92 define, encapsulate or complete that of the other daily psalms? If Ps 92 were the earliest of the collection to be employed in the daily worship service – a view that was questioned in chapter 2 as speculative and unprovable – then the other psalms may have been chosen to conform in some way to it with

regard to motifs and language. If the seven were chosen as a group, then one might find that the motifs of the Sabbath psalm finalize or fill out elements from the other psalms. If the selection of psalms was random or if the Sabbath psalm was independent of the others, then one might find very little commonality.

In any case, such speculations require an examination of the overlap and interrelationships of Ps 92 with the other daily psalms. This will be the task of the present section.[61] The connections with Ps 24 and Ps 93 have already been noted as part of the study of consecutive psalms.

Psalms 92 and 48[62]

Three important motifs are shared by Ps 48 and 92. The first is that of a setting in Zion. Both psalms feature Zion as a place of security and prosperity, where the faithful are in the presence of God (Ps 48:13–15; 92:13–15). Secondly, both psalms proclaim the destruction of enemies – of the hostile kings who come to attack Zion in Ps 48:4–8 and of the enemies of Yahweh and the speaking voice in Ps 92:10, 12.[63] The third common element is the motif of praise of Yahweh (48:2, 11; 92:2). This motif is developed in both psalms in terms of liturgical associations (procession in 48:13–14; instruments in 92:4), instructions to others to praise (48:14; 92:2–3) and the witness of the speaking voice to a personal experience of Yahweh's deliverance (48:9; 92:5).

The common vocabulary in the two psalms creates connections between them on a formal level. Close scrutiny of verses in the different psalms in which the same words appear reveals that for the

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[61] Liebreich carried out a partial survey of points of contact between Ps 92 and the other psalms and concluded that the position of the Sabbath psalm can only be explained in terms of its connections with the others, for which it is a summarizing and consoling conclusion ("Psalms of the Levites," 172–73). His treatment is not complete. He concentrated on the relation with Ps 94. For the most part he noted overlaps in language but did not pay much attention to semantic considerations, context or motifs. In particular, he did not consider the differences between the psalms at the points of contact. See n. 15.

[62] Common vocabulary: גדל, חסד, ידע, עולם, צדק, שׂמח, שׁם, שׁמע. At least four of these words (ידע, עולם, צדק, שׁמע) are not associated with contextual points of similarity. See n. 64.

[63] In Ps 92, the enemies are gone forever, while in Ps 48, the emphasis on the fortifications of Zion suggests that a threat could reappear.

most part the contexts of occurrence are complementary rather than congruent.[64] The common vocabulary is not used in contradictory ways between the two psalms. About half of the shared words can be associated with the motif of praise. Overall the two psalms may be seen as harmonious.

Psalms 92 and 82[65]

These two psalms share a motif of the removal of a certain group who have acted contrary to the divine will. In Ps 82, this group comprises the divine beings who reject the poor and assist the wicked, while in Ps 92, it is the wicked themselves who oppress the psalmist and are enemies of God.[66] The group is also characterized by ignorance.[67] In Ps 82, the end of the erring group is ordered, while in Ps 92 its demise is presented as complete. One might therefore see the two psalms as the beginning and the end of a process of removal of the wicked group.

Zion is the primary location assumed by both psalms. The vision in Ps 82 is of the divine assembly meeting in the heavenly temple, while in Ps 92, the psalmist sees the righteous dwelling around the temple, which, given the idyllic nature of the vision, is most likely to be taken as the mystical blending of the earthly and heavenly places.

The divine title עליון is found in only these two of the daily psalms (82:6; 92:2).

These similarities are opposed by differences that tend to separate the two psalms. Psalm 92 lacks any judicial imagery for God whereas

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[64] The occurrences of שם in the context of the universal power of Yahweh (48:11; 92:2) and of גדל describing Yahweh's action (48:2; 92:6) provide the clearest examples of common vocabulary expressing similar ideas in the two psalms. Ideas expressed using the other vocabulary tends to be more disjoint: חסד is meditated upon in 48:10 and proclaimed in 92:3; Zion rejoices (שׂמח) because of Yahweh's rule in 48:12 and the speaker rejoices because of Yahweh's action in 92:5; in 48:9, the speaking voice admits hearing (שׁמע) about Yahweh's protection, while in the (obscure) verse 92:12, the speaker learns about the enemies; ידע in 48:4 refers to the revelation of God, but in 92:7 a deficiency in the foolish; Zion is established forever (עולם) by God (48:9), but Yahweh is on high forever (92:9); the root צדק refers to a property of Yahweh in 48:11, but to a group of people in 92:13.

[65] Common vocabulary: בין, יד, ידע, עול, עליון, קום, צדק, רשׁע. But see n. 68.

[66] Some common vocabulary is associated with this motif: the wicked are רשׁע (82:2, 4; 92:8) and support עול (82:2), a quality not possessed by God (92:16).

[67] בין, ידע in 82:5 and 92:7.

this is the dominant metaphor in Ps 82. Likewise, while Ps 92 refers to God's actions (92:5), Ps 82 depicts no deed of God other than speech. In Ps 82, Yahweh is accessible by humans, since the vision is of the interior of the Temple and the plea in 82:2 is addressed to Yahweh. Divine transcendence, however, is stressed in Ps 92. Yahweh exists eternally "on high," while the righteous merely dwell in the courts around the outside of the Temple. While both psalms have in mind the punishment of the wicked, only Ps 92 develops the counter theme of reward for the righteous. Differences also appear in the use of vocabulary common to the two psalms.[68]

These differences offset the links that may be perceived in the common setting and interest in retribution for the wicked. The two psalms are not closely aligned.

Psalms 92 and 94[69]

These two psalms have the greatest number of words in common of any pair of daily psalms. The majority of this common vocabulary is connected with motifs concerning the categorization of humanity. In both psalms, humanity is divided broadly into two groups, the righteous and the wicked.[70]

One characteristic trait of the wicked found in both psalms is hostility towards the righteous, including the speaking voice and God. In both psalms, the speaking voice declares that persecution by enemies has been part of its experience (94:16–19; 92:12). Persecution is a present reality for the righteous in Ps 94 (vv. 3–7, 13, 15, 20–21). Explicit reference to ongoing persecution is lacking in Ps 92. Another characteristic of the wicked is misperception of reality. They fail to

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[68] Difference extends to the common vocabulary. The verb קום is used with contrasting subjects – in 82:8, Yahweh is called on to rise in judgement but in 92:12, it is the evil ones who rise to oppress. The links formed by the idiomatic use of יד (82:4; 92:5) and by צדק (82:3; 92:13) are largely superficial and not associated with congruent motifs.

[69] Common vocabulary: אזן, און, בין, בער, חסד, ידע, ישׁר, כסיל, מחשׁבה, נבט, עין, פעל, קום, צדק, צור, רעע, רע/רעה, רשׁע, שׁמע. About one third of the links formed by common vocabulary do not extend to contextual links, see nn. 71, 74 and 75.

[70] The term צדיק, righteous, appears in 92:13; 94:21 and the root in 94:15 where the parallelism indicates it designates a person. Many other terms are used for this group in Ps 94. The vocabulary designating the wicked is more varied. The key terms are the root רעע (92:12; 94:13, 16, 23), רשׁע (92:8; 94:3, 13, 21) and פעל־און (92:8, 10; 94:4, 16). The last term only occurs in these two psalms. און also appears alone in 94:23.

recognize that Yahweh will act against evil practices (94:7–10; 92:7).[71] The fate of the wicked is destruction (94:2, 13, 23; 92:10, 12).

Conversely, the righteous will, or have, received benefits from Yahweh. In Ps 94, protection and deliverance are promised to them, and these have been experienced by the speaking voice (94:14, 15, 17, 19, 22). In Ps 92, the speaking voice has experienced deliverance as well as prosperity and describes the righteous as flourishing within the security of the Temple precincts (92:11–15).[72] The righteous enjoy a continuing close relationship with Yahweh (94:12; 92:14).

The reliability of Yahweh is asserted in both Psalms (94:14, 8–11, 18; 92:3, 16).[73] Yahweh will act to rectify the situation, although neither of the psalms make clear what form this will action take.[74] Two forms of action are suggested by other Tamid Psalms, that of overawing majesty (Ps 48) and that of judicial decree (Ps 82). An oblique connection to Zion as the seat of divine government is established via the reference to thrones in Ps 94:20. Zion, of course, is the central location in Ps 92.

Similarities in motifs and common vocabulary create strong links between Ps 92 and 94.[75] However, there are also marked differences in the outlook of the psalms. Ps 92 is oriented to praise of Yahweh. The verses on past suffering do not approach the longer anguished descriptions found in Ps 94. Nor is there in Ps 92 the feeling of frustration expressed in Ps 94:2, 3, and the characterization of Yahweh

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[71] The common vocabulary, בער and כסיל, is striking (94:8; 92:7). The psalms share the verbs בין and ידע in this context (94:8; 92:7, cf. 94:7, 11, where ידע is applied in contrasting ways to God). Two other verbs of perception, שמע and נבט, along with the sensory organs, עין and אזן, are used in non-overlapping ways, being applied to God in rhetorical questions in Ps 94:9 and describing the experience of the speaking voice in Ps 92:12.

[72] Both psalms describe Yahweh as צור (94:22; 92:16).

[73] A shared term here is חסד (94:18; 92:3). ישר is associated with Yahweh in 92:16, but a person in 94:15.

[74] The speaking voice in Ps 94:16 testifies that Yahweh has risen to its aid (קום, cf. 82:8). The same verb is applied to the hostile actions of the wicked in Ps 92:12. Perhaps verbal assaults are in view, although the descriptions of suffering in 94:6, 17, 21 imply something more severe.

[75] The common vocabulary creates links on a formal level. However, not all of these links extend to the context of the usage of common terms. The preceding notes have identified some common vocabulary that appears in different contexts in each psalm (אזן, ישר, נבט, עין, קום, שמע). In addition, מחשבה is used of God's mysterious plans in Ps 92:6 and futile human schemes in Ps 94:11. Overall, about one-third of the links formed by common vocabulary are more formal than contextual.

as judge (שפט) is absent from Ps 92. Psalm 94 is a clear call to the faithful to hang on during difficult times. Such a plea is not made explicitly in Ps 92, although it may be implied by the psalm itself. These differences are consistent with a view that Ps 92 presents a picture of a blessed future when the difficulties expressed in Ps 94 are resolved and God's people enjoy a secure and prosperous life.

Psalms 92 and 81[76]

The most striking similarity between these two psalms lies in the opening calls to worship with their lists of instruments.[77] Worship, in particular the references to festival celebrations, in Ps 81 creates an allusion to the Jerusalem Temple that also appears in Ps 92 as the place of praise and location of Yahweh. Formally, both psalms contain צור in their closing verses. In Ps 92, this is a title for Yahweh. Its referent in Ps 81 is obscure.[78]

Both psalms describe a group in opposition to God.[79] In Ps 81, this group is enemies of the people Israel, who may become enemies of God and consequently be destroyed (81:6, 15, 16). The characterization of this group is more developed in Ps 92. The speaking voice in Ps 92 looks back on the destruction of personal enemies (92:12) and on those hostile to God (92:10).

A reward for righteous behavior is envisaged in both psalms. In Ps 81, this is the removal of Israel's enemies and the promise of delectable food (81:15–17), while in Ps 92 it takes the form of a vision of luxuriant communion with God (92:13–15).

There are some marked differences in the way these points of similarity are handled in the two psalms. In Ps 81, threat from enemies is a present reality; in Ps 92, the threat has passed. Psalm 92 does not suggest that Israel's worship of Yahweh is imperfect. Indeed the testimony of the speaking voice and the vision of the righteous

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[76] Common vocabulary: איב, זמר, יד, ידע, כנור, נבל, עולם, צור, רנן, שמע. See n. 80 for a list of words whose contexts are dissimilar.

[77] זמר (81:3; 92:4), נבל (81:3; 92:2), and כנור (81:3; 92:4), also רנן (81:2; 92:5).

[78] צור is used in Ps 94:22 as a title for Yahweh. Since two of three occurrences of צור in the Tamid Psalms are as titles for Yahweh, one might argue that the word should be construed as a reference to Yahweh in Ps 81 as a Tamid Psalm. See comment on 81:17 in ch. 3.

[79] The common term here is איב (81:15; 92:10). Several other terms are used in Ps 92 to denote this group, but only one other, משנאי־יהוה, in Ps 81 (v. 16).

in the Temple imply the opposite. Similarly, the speaking voice in Ps 92 seems to be enjoying the benefits predicted in Ps 81:17. These are differences in temporal perspective and once again may be consistent with the explanation that Ps 92 contains a vision of the future in which the problems of the present are over.

The call to worship also functions differently in the two psalms. In Ps 81, the call becomes an instruction to attend regular festivals and leads into a reminiscence of the Exodus and reception of the commandments. In Ps 92, the call is part of the summons to continual praise that brackets the testimony of the speaking voice. Festivals, Exodus and commandments do not feature in this psalm.[80] In line with this, God is neither militant nor a lawgiver in Ps 92.

This section opened by asking about the extent to which Ps 92 interrelated with the other psalms. Several links were observed. The most common and strongest of these were associated with motifs of praise, security, location in Zion and punishment (or reward) for errant (or faithful) behavior. Parallels between Ps 92 and 94 were particularly close. These connections suggest that Ps 92 is not independent of the other psalms. However, for most psalms, there are points of divergence. These vary from psalm to psalm. One common point of divergence is the characterization of Yahweh as judge (שׁפט) which is lacking in Ps 92, dominates Ps 82 and appears in other daily psalms. Common vocabulary is an uncertain witness, as in some places the same word is used in dissimilar, even contradictory, contexts. Close examination of the connections between psalms reveals that while links exist between Ps 92 and the others, these are not so strong as to warrant the claim that Ps 92 possesses either temporal or conceptual priority.

In some cases divergences were consistent with an interpretation that viewed Ps 92 as a vision of an idyllic future when the present problems faced in the other psalms are gone and where the blessing promised to the righteous in Ps 24:5 has been received. This hypothesis, however, does not necessitate the conclusion that Ps 92 influenced the choice of other psalms. The vision of Ps 92 is sufficiently

[80] At least four items from the common vocabulary are used in non-congruent ways: יד (used in idiomatic ways in 81:15; 92:5), עולם (81:16, used of the enemies in a verse whose meaning is obscure; 92:9, of Yahweh), ידע (81:6, applied to the speaking voice; 92:7, of the fool); שׁמע (81:6, 9, 12, 14, as a plea to accept Yahweh; 92:12, when the voice describes seeing the ruin of the enemies).

general as to be able to coordinate with almost any psalm of communal or individual lament. Conversely, almost any piece presenting a vision of an untroubled future and the demise of the wicked would serve as well as Ps 92 as a concluding psalm under this hypothetical interpretation.

The links between Ps 92 and the other daily psalms are, on the whole, no stronger, and often weaker, than those between consecutive psalms. (The exception here is Ps 94.) This suggests that the primary structural feature of the collection is the sequential relationship of the psalms and that Ps 92 was not the inspiration or encapsulation of the collection. The strong link between Ps 92 and 94 affords another, secondary, structural characteristic of the collection. Previously, it was noted that a disjunction existed in the weekly sequence between Ps 92 and the other six weekday psalms. The disjunction is mitigated by the conjunction of Ps 92 and 94, which creates a connection between the Sabbath Psalm and the approximate center of the weekday psalms.[81] The sequential aspect of the collection provides its primary structural characteristic, and the disjunction and conjunction yields balanced secondary characteristics.

Structural characteristics carry important implications for the "composition" of the psalms, as their presence is evidence that the selection of all seven Tamid Psalms was neither random nor independent and that their order is intentional. This in turn provides further motivation for studying the collection as a composition with literary unity.

3. *Motifs and Agents in the Tamid Psalms*

Discussion of each Tamid Psalm closed with a survey of the theme and motifs in the psalm and an examination of the characterization of the agents, Yahweh, humans and others. The previous section also drew heavily on the presence of such elements in pairs of psalms. In this section, these various observations are joined together in a synthesis of motifs and characterizations found in the psalms as a group. The characterization of the principal agents will be considered first, then the motifs, which mostly concern interactions

[81] A more polished example of a link between the end and the center of a work may be observed in Lamentations, where the expression of confidence in Lam 3:21–23 can be interpreted as a faithful response to the assessment of reality with which the book ends, Lam 5:19–22.

between agents. Finally, some topics that are absent from the psalms will be noted. This section contains a certain amount of repetition, since motifs and characterizations are not neatly separated but intertwine and overlap. Of necessity, some material presented earlier in the discussion of individual psalms and their interactions will be repeated here.

3.1 *Agents*

The agent *Yahweh* appears in all seven psalms.[82] God is depicted as superior to all else and this supremacy is exemplified in several ways. Yahweh typically is portrayed as *ruler* or judge who governs Israel and the world (e.g., Ps 48:12; 82:1, 8; 94:2, 23; 81:14). This role is epitomized in the title of king (Ps 24:10; 48:3; 93:1). Further, Yahweh is frequently placed in a *relationship of possession* with other agents – the world (Ps 24:1; 94:2), the city Zion (Ps 48:2, 3, 9), the mountain (Ps 24:3; 48:2), the Temple (Ps 24:3; 48:10; 93:5), the throne (Ps 93:2), the Torah (Ps 94:12) , the nations (Ps 82:8); or certain people, including Israel (Ps 24:6; 48:15; 94:5, 14; 81:12, 14; 92:13). Spatially, God is placed *above* other agents. Yahweh dwells on high (Ps 93:4; 92:9), above the Sea (Ps 93:3, 4), agents go up for a meeting (Ps 24:3, 7), and God rises above the other divine beings and the earth in judgment (Ps 81:1, 8; 94:2). Temporally, references to Yahweh's *permanence* occur often. God is described as "eternal" (Ps 48:15; 93:2, 5; 92:9) and this property extends to agents associated with Yahweh (Ps 24:7, 9; 48:9; 81:16; 93:2, 5; 92:15). Allied to this is the notion that Yahweh is *reliable* and will behave consistently in an expected manner (Ps 48:10, 14; 94:14, 15, 18; 81:14, 15; 93:5; 92:3, 16).[83] That manner involves *protection* of, even partiality towards, a certain group (Ps 24:5; 48:4, 10; 82:3–4; 94:14, 22; 81:7, 15; 92:11–15). Yahweh is *powerful* (Ps 24:8; 48:2; 81:2, 15; 93:1) and the divine appearance is *majestic* (Ps 24:7–10; 48:6; 94:1; 93:1, 4).

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[82] The epithets of Yahweh are king (24:10, 48:2, 93:1), creator (94:9; 24:2), Yahweh Sabaoth (24:10; 48:9), hero (24:8), strong one (24:8; 81:2), great one (48:2); saving one (24:5; 48:4), Rock (94:22; 92:16), God of Jacob (94:7; 81:2, 5; 24:6?), teacher (94:10), God of retribution (94:1), judge of earth (94:2), eternal one (93:2), Most High (92:2), my/our/your/their God (48:2, 9; 94:22, 23; 81:11; 92:14). What is predicated of Yahweh extends beyond these epithets.

[83] Yahweh's reliability undergirds the confidence expressed in Ps 24:5; 94:23; 92:5.

Six psalms contain references to *human beings* and their behavior. (The exception is Ps 93.) These references are non-specific and classify people into stereotyped groups. A range of terminology is involved: the wicked (עול, מרעים, פעלי־און, רשׁעים; Ps 92:8, 10, 12; 94:3, 4, 13,16; 82:2, 4), the foolish (כסיל, אישׁ־בער; Ps 92:7; 94:8), enemies (איבים, צריהם, המלכים; Ps 48:5, 81:15, 92:10), the righteous (צדיק, נקי־כפים ובר־לבב, ישׁרי־לב, צדק; Ps 24:4; 94:15, 21; 92:13), the nation (ישׂראל, דור, יעקב, יהוסף, עמי, נחלה, Ps 24:6; 48:14; 81:2, 5, 6, 9, 12, 14; 94:5, 7, 14), the powerless (דל, יתום, עני, רשׁ, אביון, אלמנה, גר; Ps 82:3, 4; 94:6), those who go up and visit Zion (Ps 24:3; 48). In addition, the speaking voice can be identified with certain of these groups, as pilgrim in Ps 48, one of the powerless in Ps 82, one of Yahweh's possession in Ps 94, a member of Israel in Ps 81 and one of the righteous in Ps 92.

The groups listed above can be simplified. Internal parallelism within each psalm and usage across the group of Tamid Psalms creates equivalences between different terminology, and, when these are taken into account, the different classes coalesce into two.[84] One group is aligned with Yahweh, the other against. For convenience, these groups are referred to as the righteous and the wicked. The primary motif concerning humanity in the Tamid Psalms is the *division into two groups*.

The righteous are characterized as those who seek Yahweh (Ps 24:3, 6; 81:14), behave in a moral way (Ps 24:4a), enjoy benefits from Yahweh (Ps 24:5; 81:17; 92:13–15), worship Yahweh (Ps 48:10; 92:2–4), proclaim Yahweh (Ps 48:14–15; 92:5, 16), suffer persecution (Ps 82:3–4; 94:5–6, 16–19; 92:12) and receive protection from Yahweh (Ps 48:4; 82:3–4; 94: 14–15, 16–19; 81:15–16). The wicked, on the other hand, are idolatrous (Ps 81:12–13, cf. 24:4b), deceitful (Ps 24:4c; 94:21), violent (Ps 48:5; 94:6), ignorant (Ps 94:8; 92:7), oppress the poor and righteous (94:6; 92:12), reject Yahweh (Ps 94:7,

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[84] In Ps 92 and 94, the wicked are also the foolish and, in Ps 92, these people are also the enemies of Yahweh. Psalm 94 aligns Yahweh's people (possession, the nation) with the powerless and the righteous. The opposition between the wicked/enemies of Yahweh and the powerless/nation features in Ps 48, 82 and 81. On the wicked as oppressors of the human speaking voice in the psalms, see Gerald T. Sheppard, "'Enemies' and the Politics of Prayer in the Book of Psalms," in *The Bible and the Politics of Exegesis: Essays in Honor of Norman K. Gottwald on his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (ed. David Jobling, Peggy L. Day and Gerald T. Sheppard; Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim, 1991), 65.

20; 92:7) and enjoy success in the present (Ps 82:2; 94:3; 92:8), but are destined for destruction (Ps 48:7–8; 82:7; 94:23; 81:16; 92:8, 10).

These lists of attributes for the righteous and the wicked cluster around two centers that can be conveniently labeled as worship and hostility.

The righteous worship Yahweh. In Ps 24, they are the group that go up to the Temple. In Ps 48, they worship in the Temple, participate in the liturgical procession and proclaim the reliability of Yahweh. Study of the Torah is one of the blessings of the righteous in Ps 94. In Ps 92, worship is tied to proclamation, which is carried out by the psalmist and the righteous (as trees). In Ps 81, the motif is skewed somewhat. In the opening verses it is clear that worship is enjoined upon God's people (vv. 5–6), but as the psalm progresses, it becomes apparent that Israel is not worshipping appropriately (vv. 10, 14). The motif of worship does not appear in Ps 82, where the righteous (as the poor) are passive.

The wicked, on the other hand, exhibit a faulty cognition of reality. The do not recognize or accept the norms that God has ordained and misperceive the truth. Such a state corresponds to the opposite of worship. In Ps 94, the wicked incorrectly estimate that God will not notice their behavior. In Ps 92, they fail to evaluate properly the works of God. The divine beings in Ps 82, and by implication their human cohorts, do not perceive the error in their behavior. It is as if they are in darkness (v. 5). Faulty cognition is dramatically expressed in Ps 48 by the contrast between the reactions of the kings and the congregation to the sight of Jerusalem. For one, it inspires worship, for the other, dismay. The case of Ps 81 is again anomalous, for in it Israel represents at the same time the worshipping community and those in error. Failure to follow the advice of Yahweh shows their misunderstanding of reality. Characterization of the wicked appears only indirectly in Ps 24, in the prescription that one who would ascend to Yahweh not practice deceit or idolatry.

The other distinctive characteristic of the righteous is the presence of threat, that is, the righteous are objects of hostility. In some cases, the threat is a present reality. Ps 81 alludes to the presence of hostile forces and Ps 94 describes their ravages. In others, the menace has passed – the hostile kings have fled in Ps 48 and the enemies of the voice have been frustrated in Ps 92. Ps 82 stands on the border between these two as it envisages the moment when the end of the persecution is ordered. This element is absent from Ps 24.

The wicked are the ones who exhibit hostility. On one hand, they are antagonistic to Yahweh. In Ps 92 they are categorized as enemies of Yahweh. In Ps 48, when the kings march against Jerusalem they are in effect marching against God, because of the close alignment of the city with Yahweh. In Ps 94, opposition takes the form of sneers about God's abilities. More often, however, the wicked are portrayed as being hostile to the righteous. They are the ones who create the threat faced by the righteous. In Ps 82 and 94, the wicked oppress the powerless while in Ps 92 it is the voice, and perhaps also the implied audience, who have been oppressed by them and who currently suffer deprivations. One might also find in Ps 48 an example of the motif of hostility, inasmuch as the kings attack Jerusalem, the place of worship of the people. The motif appears in two ways in Ps 81. On the surface, there is a short reference to the enemies of Israel, who, if the nation reformed, would become enemies of God. Yet, at a deeper level, opposition is also part of the ambiguous presentation of Israel's faith – Israel is its own worst enemy (Ps 81:12–13).

The Tamid Psalms contain other agents in addition to Yahweh and humans. The third set of agents are non-human or inanimate. The most frequently occurring of these is the mundane locale of Yahweh. This site is not identified consistently by any one term in all, or even most, of the Tamid Psalms, but is variously referred to as the mountain of Yahweh (Ps 24:3, 48:2, 3), God's holy place (Ps 24:3; 93:5), the city of God (Ps 48:2, 3, 9), Zion (Ps 48:3), the Temple (Ps 48:10), the throne (Ps 93:2) and God's house (Ps 93:5; 92:14). For convenience here this agent is called Zion. Zion is present in various roles in all the Tamid Psalms. In Ps 24, it is the destination of the pure-in-heart person who will ascend the holy mountain to the sanctuary and also of Yahweh who will come in through the gates. In Ps 48, the city of Jerusalem/Zion epitomizes Yahweh's presence and protection of the people. The judgment in Ps 82 takes place in the heavenly court in Zion, the celestial counterpart of the mundane Temple. The presence of the human voice in the closing line of this psalm points to the linkage between the mundane and the celestial – humans in first one may observe events in the other. Ps 92 also contains a depiction of the blessed life of the righteous alongside the Temple of Yahweh. The magnificent vision of Yahweh contained in Ps 93 is experienced in the celestial palace, as is indicated by terms

such as throne (כסא), house (בית) and on high (מרום). Zion is also the most probable setting for Ps 94 and 81, although this is not stated as explicitly in these psalms as in the others. The evidence for this setting was presented in the discussion of the relations between these psalms and Ps 24 in section 2.2. For Ps 94, Zion is the place of judgment of the wicked, as it is in Ps 82, and a place of refuge for the oppressed. In Ps 81, Zion is the center of worship, the seat of divine government and instruction and the ultimate haven for those who turn to Yahweh.

The common thread that runs through these different roles of Zion is that of encounter with Yahweh. Hence the inanimate agent with the highest profile in the Tamid Psalms is Zion, and its primary characteristic is that it is the site where Yahweh is experienced.

There are several other inanimate agents in the Tamid Psalms. These have roles subordinate to the agents noted above. These minor agents illustrate certain aspects of the agents mentioned previously or of the leading motifs in the psalms.

The most important of these other agents is the world (תבל, ארץ; Ps 24:1; 48:3, 11; 82:5, 8; 94:2; 93:1). This agent is passive in the Tamid Psalms. It is constructed and owned by Yahweh (Ps 24:1; 93:1) and reacts to forces at work on and in it, both good and bad (Ps 82:5; 48:3); ultimately it is dominated by God (Ps 48:11; 94:2). In the Tamid Psalms, the world functions for the most part as a foil for some other agent, intensifying some property attributed to them.[85]

Yahweh's decisions (Torah, commandments, etc.) appear in Ps 48:12; 94:12, 20; 81:5, 6, 10; 93:5. These do not have an independent role, but support the depiction of Yahweh as ruler of the world and leader of Israel.

The (super)natural agents of the waters/rivers/sea (ים, מים, נהרות) are mentioned in Ps 24:1 and 93:3–4. In Ps 24, they play a supporting role. The foundation of the earth on the sea indicates the power and supremacy of Yahweh. Similarly in Ps 93, their role is to attest to the supremacy of Yahweh either by giving homage to

[85] In Ps 24, the world has a dual role, illustrating the extent of Yahweh's possession and creative power but also preparing for the introduction of the place of encounter with Yahweh; in Ps 48, the world is a backdrop against which is set the incomparability of Zion and the extent of Yahweh's fame; in Ps 82, it emphasizes the disastrous effects of the behavior of the angels; Ps 94 has Yahweh's dominion in view; and Ps 93, Yahweh's eternal nature.

Yahweh (as was argued in the discussion of that psalm) or falling defeated under God (as is frequently asserted).

Errant divine beings occur in Ps 82 and can be conveniently assimilated to the category of the wicked whose interests they serve. Finally, the gates in Ps 24 are aligned with the company who seek Yahweh (the righteous), for example, through the language of the psalm (נשׂא), and the cities in Ps 48 with the worshippers who also rejoice (vv. 11–12).

3.2 *Motifs*

Two motifs figure prominently in the Tamid Psalms. These are the motifs of worship and judgment. The motif of worship appears in various guises in all psalms. Chief among these is worship as proclamation of the experience of Yahweh. This is prominent in Ps 92, where proclamation of Yahweh's faithfulness forms the frame for the psalm (vv. 3, 16). The motif of proclamation and reception also figures strongly in Ps 48 as part of the cycle of hearing, experiencing and telling (vv. 9, 14). The personal testimony of the speaking voice is raised in praise of Yahweh's reliability in Ps 94:16–19; 92:5, 11–12. At other points the voice, although presented in a more distant way, also engages in praise or proclamation of Yahweh's support for the people (Ps 24:5, 10; 93:8; 92:6c–8, 11).

Worship is not only the prerogative of humans. Inanimate agents join in worship of Yahweh: the gates (Ps 24:7, 9), the cities (Ps 48:12), the world (Ps 48:11) and the rivers (Ps 93:3).

In essence, in the Hebrew Bible worship is an encounter with Yahweh. Such an encounter is anticipated and prepared for in Ps 24:3, 7, 9. In a similar vein calls to worship are found in Ps 81:2–6 and 92:2–4. These last two psalms also speak of performance of rituals of worship, in particular, of music. Ritual figures prominently in Ps 48, with allusions to the experience of God in the Temple and through the liturgical procession around the city. In this psalm, God is directly encountered in the city itself. In Ps 94, the encounter with God takes place through the medium of the Torah, which Yahweh teaches to the righteous (v. 12). Ps 93 relates a visionary encounter with Yahweh. For the righteous an encounter with Yahweh is something to be sought and remembered, but for the wicked, it ends only in destruction (Ps 48:5–8; Ps 82:6–7).

Encounter presupposes that Yahweh is present in a place accessible to humanity. Repeated references in the Tamid Psalms to such

a place, the mundane locale of Yahweh, glossed here as Zion, have been noted already. The motif of worship as encounter goes hand in hand with the emphasis on the agent Zion in the Tamid Psalms.[86]

Defective worship also figures in the Tamid Psalms. This is exemplified by the behavior of the wicked in Ps 94 and 92, who ignorantly scoff at Yahweh (94:7; 92:7). Taunts escalate into open hostility in Ps 48:5–8, where the kings who attack have an experience of Yahweh in the same form as that expressed by the faithful worshippers, but with a very different quality and outcome. Israel ignores Yahweh and follows its own path in Ps 81:13, as, similarly, do the wicked and the angels in Ps 82. Idolatry is the essence of defective worship (Ps 81:10, 14; 24:4).[87]

Finally, worship is commanded of the righteous (Ps 92:2; 48:14; 81:5–6; cf. 24:6). One of the two defining characteristics of the righteous (and the wicked) is worship. The righteous seek to worship Yahweh, to experience the divine presence and to proclaim and praise their God. Conversely, the wicked pursue their own course in opposition to God.

The characterization of the righteous as those who have aligned themselves with Yahweh through worship and of the wicked as those who have spurned Yahweh forms the connection between the motif of worship and the division of humanity into two classes.[88]

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[86] The setting of the service in the Jerusalem Temple provides a pragmatic reason for the choice of psalms in which Zion played a significant role.

[87] See the characterization of the wicked in section 3.1 above.

[88] Righteousness is primarily portrayed in the Tamid Psalms in terms of piety. In only one psalm, Ps 82, is righteousness directly associated with commands to support the moral order of the world. Conversely, unrighteousness, although associated with actions that undermine the moral order of the world (e.g., in Ps 94), is more frequently lack of piety (or proper respect for or fear of Yahweh). This portrayal is at odds with a common conception of righteousness in the Ancient Near East in which, in the words of Douglas A. Knight, "'righteousness' for humans is thus not fundamentally a stance of piety but a pattern of behavior which supports rather than subverts the cosmic and moral order." It is closer to the characterization of the righteous person found in the letter of Aristeas, which Gabriele Boccaccini summarizes thus: "It is not the person who strives hard to do good but the one who, with purity of soul and serene awareness, directs life toward the righteous goal: recognizing the beginning and end of everything as being in God and receiving from God salvation, that is, blessings and the good, well-being and well-doing." See Knight, "Cosmogony and Order in the Hebrew Tradition," in *Cosmogony and Ethical Order: New Studies in Comparative Ethics* (ed. Robin W. Lovin and Frank E. Reynolds; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 140; Boccaccini, *Middle Judaism: Jewish Thought, 300 B.C.E. To 200 C.E.* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 174.

The other prominent motif is that of judgment. The term "judgment" in English admits of a degree of polysemy, as it can encompass both the words spoken in the rendering of a decision, either for or against, and the outworking of this sentence. The first aspect features in Ps 82 and 94, where Yahweh is depicted as condemning those who have behaved incorrectly. Critical evaluation of behavior is implicit in Ps 81, where Yahweh declares Israel's current practices to be incorrect, and in Ps 24, where a blessing is anticipated for appropriate behavior.

Actualization of the consequences of behavior is the more prominent aspect of the motif of judgment in the Tamid Psalms. This aspect is clearly associated with the concept of retribution. In its full-blown form, retribution entails the twin doctrines of punishment for misdeeds and reward for correct behavior. Such a form appears in Ps 92. There, in a generalization, the speaking voice promises that the ones who have misbehaved will experience not just the loss of their gains, but complete destruction (vv. 8, 10) and that the righteous, on the other hand, will enjoy prosperity and long life in the presence of Yahweh (vv. 13–14). There can be no greater punishment or reward than these. Extremes of payback are in keeping with a sharp division between wicked and righteous. The voice also attests to the action of retribution having taken place in its own experience, in a particularization parallel to that promised in the generalization (vv. 11–12).

The full form of retribution also features in Ps 81. Here, however, retribution is given the twist that the "wicked" and the "righteous" are actually the same group, Israel, exhibiting different behavior towards Yahweh. Israel, in the present of the psalm, has ceased to worship Yahweh and indulges in idolatry of some form (vv. 9–10, 12–13). As a result it suffers threats from enemies. Israel, in the past, when it cried to Yahweh, received protection, and Israel, in the future, were it to return to Yahweh, will again receive protection and material rewards, according to the authoritative word of the speaking voice as Yahweh (vv. 11, 14–17).

Partial versions of the motif of retributive judgment occur in other of the Tamid Psalms. The thought of Ps 94 is similar to that of Ps 92. The psalm promises in no uncertain terms the decline and destruction of the wicked. Moreover, the righteous will receive assistance from Yahweh. However, instead of material rewards, they are only assured of divine protection to help them through periods of

persecution. Psalm 48 moves in a comparable direction. Again, the wicked (the kings) have been destroyed. The righteous, in turn, gain confidence in the everlasting security provided by Yahweh when they view the city of Zion. Material reward is not explicit here, although there may be either the assumption that security guarantees prosperity or the use of safety as a metonymy for total prosperity.

Psalm 82 presents judgment as punishment, that is, only half of the full doctrine of retribution. The wicked heavenly beings (and by implication their henchpersons on earth) lose immortality and are condemned to death (vv. 2, 6–7). The positive aspect of reward is not developed beyond a command to aid the poor (vv. 3–4). On the other hand, a positive expression of the motif occurs in Ps 24, where the righteous are guaranteed some reward when they encounter Yahweh (v. 5).[89]

Yahweh is the guarantor and agent of judgment. Yahweh pronounces sentence (Ps 82; 94); Yahweh is the source of reward (Ps 24; 81) and Yahweh's existence guarantees that punishment will occur (Ps 48; 92). However, Yahweh's role in the implementation of punishment is left ambiguous. In Ps 94:23, it seems that Yahweh is the one who carries out the sentence. In other places, the negative consequences of improper behavior "just happen" without further action on the part of Yahweh (e.g., Ps 48:5–7; 81:12–14; 92:12).

Just as there was a link between the motif of worship and the division of humanity into two classes, so also is there a link between judgment and this division. If anything, the link is clearer for the case of the motif of retribution. The wicked exhibit hostility and lack of worship. Both contribute to their downfall. In most cases, the violence of the wicked towards the other class is the reason that incites the promise of payback (Ps 48; 82; 94; 92). Conversely, the righteous, who were characterized in part as under threat, are most often assured of the protection of God (Ps 48; 82; 94; 81; 92) and less often material benefits (Ps 92; 81; 24). The action of the righteous that warrants reward is that of trust in Yahweh, that is, worship (except for Ps 82).

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[89] The prevalent interest in the Tamid Psalms is on punishment for the wicked. At this point, the psalms diverge from the tendency of the Hebrew Bible as a whole to see judgment as including restoration for the victim, see Knight, "Cosmogony and Order," 149.

Judgment and worship are the primary motifs present in the Tamid Psalms. However, other motifs also appear. Some of these have been touched on in relation to the discussion of the primary motifs, but nevertheless deserve to be mentioned independently.

Three psalms contain references to the stability of the earth (Ps 24:2; 82:5; 93:1). The motif functions differently in each case. In Ps 24, it is one facet of creation and provides the reason that the earth is owned by Yahweh; in Ps 82, an indication of the depravity of the wicked angels; and in Ps 93, a point of illustration for the permanence of Yahweh. The variation indicates the secondary nature of the motif in comparison with the more stable usage of the two primary motifs. The characterization of Zion also intersects the sphere of this imagery (Ps 48:9).

A motif of permanency/impermanency has already been noted in regard to the characterization of Yahweh. The divine and things associated with it possess a timeless quality, while the wicked are fleeting (Ps 24:7, 9; 48:9, 15; 93:2, 5; 92:9; cf. 81:16; 92:8).

A sapiential motif concerning the possession of, or lack of, understanding is part of the definition of the two classes of humanity. The wisdom category of the foolish appears explicitly in Ps 94:8 and 92:7. Accusations of misperception occur in Ps 48:5–8; 82:5; 94:7–10; 81:6c, 12–13; 92:7, whilst the righteous are encouraged to understand in Ps 48:13–14; 81:12–14; 81:9, 14.

Recollection of past experience serves the motif of judgment. This appears in allusions to the Exodus in Ps 81 and the personal testimony of the speaking voice (Ps 48:5–8, 9; 94:16–19; 81:6–8; 92:11–12).

At a few points, the psalms depict the interrelation of the human and natural worlds (Ps 81:5, Ps 92:8, 13–15). The non-human realm can worship God along with the human (Ps 24:7, 9; 48:3, 12; 93:3, 4).

Another point of note is the depiction of Yahweh's activity. There is a disparity between activity ascribed to Yahweh in the past or future and that described in the present. In the past, Yahweh is credited with creative activities (Ps 24:2; 94:9, 10; 93:1–2), protection of the people (Ps 48:5–8; Ps 81:7) and personal assistance to the voice (Ps 94:16–19; 92:11–12). In the future, Yahweh's arrival in glory is anticipated (Ps 24:7–10) and acts of protection are expected (Ps 94:14–15, 23; 81:15, 16). In the present, Yahweh's activity is not characterized in a physical or active way. God rules and makes decisions (Ps 48:12; 82), pleads, but does not intervene (Ps 81:9, 14), teaches, but does not reprimand (Ps 94:12), reigns magnificent, but

also above (not in) the world (Ps 93; Ps 92:9). Yahweh is not active in the present of the speaking voice in the same way as divine activity is conceived of in the past or future.[90]

3.3 *Absent Motifs*

Classification may proceed by describing deficiencies as well as properties. Having surveyed and summarized the motifs and agents that do appear in the Tamid Psalms, the next step is to note some absentees. Three are notable: lack of reference to human authority figures, absence of a messiah figure, and relative insignificance of motifs and imagery associating warlike or violent activity with Yahweh in the present.

In the Tamid Psalms, there are no direct references to positions of temporal, political or religious authority in Israel occupied by a human being, nor are there indirect references to such positions via historical or traditional holders such as Aaron. Certainly, three characters from the religious traditions of Israel are named – Jacob (Ps 24:6; 81:5; 94:7), Joseph (Ps 81:6) and Adam (Ps 82:7). However, in each case the reference is symbolic or generic – Adam is a metaphor for mortality, Jacob either part of a divine title or, along with Joseph, an alternative designation for the ethnic group otherwise referred to as Israel or God's people. Furthermore, these three characters did not function traditionally as symbols for leadership, in the same way as, for instance, Aaron in Leviticus might symbolize the high priest.

One absence is particularly notable. The Tamid Psalms contain no direct reference or allusion to the human (Davidic) king. It is commonplace in psalms scholarship to note that certain psalms refer, explicitly or implicitly, to the Davidic king. The number of psalms so identified varies. It usually includes the "Royal Psalms," Ps 2, 18, 20, 21, 45, 72, 89, 101, 110, 132, 144, which refer to a king or the "anointed one" (משיח) explicitly, but may reasonably be expanded to include others where the reference is more implicit, e.g., Ps 9–10, 22, 40, 41, 49, 56, 59, 68, 69, 86, 88, 91, 116.[91] The full list cov-

[90] Two minor qualifications should be noted. In Ps 48, protection is a static function of the appearance of the city with Yahweh, and Yahweh does not need to take an active role. Psalm 92 does not make clear whether assistance rendered to the righteous is present or future.

[91] John Day, *Psalms* (OTG 14; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 88; see also Susan E. Gillingham, "The Messiah in the Psalms: A Question of Reception History and the Psalter," in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the*

ers more than one seventh of the Psalter, but contains none of the Tamid Psalms.[92]

The absence of human officials in the Tamid Psalms grows in force by comparison with other literature. Identifiable authority figures were common in literature from the late Second Temple period. The hymn of praise in Ben Sirach which climaxes in the description of the High priest Simon participating in the Tamid service (Sir 50) is a relevant example. Such figures also appear frequently in apocalyptic literature as traditors of special instruction.

The only human authority figure in the Tamid Psalms is the speaking voice, and this, where it can be identified, is most often one of the people, someone who draws on experiences similar to those of the auditors and offers words of encouragement.

Does this indicate that reference to human authority figures was a factor selected against in the choice of the Tamid Psalms?

One can go further. The Second Temple period saw the development of a variety of conceptions concerning a future "Messiah," a figure who stood in a special relationship with God and who would act in some way as leader of the people and conduit of salvation.[93] Messianic connotations were uncovered in many biblical texts, including psalms. There is evidence of a tendency to develop consciously Messianic readings or re-readings of psalms. The LXX Psalter contains messianic connotations that are not found in the MT version.[94]

Oxford Old Testament Seminar (ed. John Day; JSOTSup 270; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 211.

[92] Thus in the Tamid Psalms, Zion clearly is separated from the Davidic or royal theology. Ben C. Ollenburger has argued that this is true more generally and Gerald H. Wilson, following him, notes as well that 11QPs[a] emphasizes the Davidic kingship but de-emphasizes the kingship of Yahweh; see Ollenburger, *Zion, the City of the Great King: A Theological Symbol of the Jerusalem Cult* (JSOTSup 41; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987); Wilson, "The Qumran Psalms Scroll (11QPs[a]) and the Canonical Psalter: Comparison of Editorial Shaping," *CBQ* 59 (1997): 452–53.

[93] See the classic essay Morton Smith, "What is Implied by the Variety of Messianic Figures?," *JBL* 78 (1959): 66–72; and for some recent perspectives, John J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other Ancient Literature* (ABRL; New York: Doubleday, 1995); Gerbern S. Oegema, *The Anointed and his People: Messianic Expectations from the Maccabees to Bar Kochba* (JSPSup 27; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998); Kenneth E. Pomykala, *The Davidic Dynasty Tradition in Early Judaism: Its History and Significance for Messianism* (SBLEJL 7; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995).

[94] E.g. Ps 72 and 110, see Gillingham, "Messiah in Psalms," 229–32; also Oegema, *Anointed*, 43–44; Joachim Schaper, *Eschatology in the Greek Psalter* (WUNT 2/76; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1995), 138–60.

The royal psalms listed above naturally lend themselves to messianic interpretations.[95]

In light of this, it is remarkable that none of the Tamid Psalms is particularly well-suited to a messianic interpretation nor have they contributed significant texts to ancient literature espousing messianic views. To conclude that this indicates a rejection of messianic beliefs on the part of the selectors of the Tamid Psalms may be too strong an inference. However, it is often proposed that the expectation of a Messiah was widespread in the late Second Temple period. John J. Collins, for example, claims that it formed part of the common core of Judaism.[96] The absence of the Messiah from the Tamid Psalms speaks strongly against this view.[97] If expectation of a Messiah was an element of the common core of Judaism, how likely is it that it would be unrepresented in the fundamental worship service of the central worship place and unique sanctuary of the religion?[98]

The third notable lack in the Tamid Psalms concerns the application of warrior imagery and motifs to Yahweh. Although such imagery is present, it is relatively less developed and less prominent in the Tamid Psalms than in other psalms and in contemporary literature. This assertion is supported here by a review of the presence or absence in the Tamid Psalms of characteristics of the divine

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[95] According to Oegema, messianic interpretations have survived only for Ps 2, 10, 23, 24, 69, 72, 90, 97, 110, 117. Psalm 24 is mentioned in Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 36, 85, where Justin argues that the psalm applies to Christ entering heaven and receiving the same titles as God, rather than an application to Solomon and the Ark, which he says was the contemporary interpretation in Judaism. The psalm also appears in the *Epistle of Barnabas*. Both of these are later, peculiarly Christian readings of Ps 24. See Oegema, *Anointed*, 294–302.

[96] Collins, *Scepter and Star*, 10–11, 12. Craig A. Evans sees messianism as presupposed in the Dead Sea Scrolls; see "Qumran's Messiah: How important is he?," in *Religion in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature* (ed. John J. Collins and Robert A. Kugler; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000), 135–49; and also Michael A. Knibb, "Eschatology and Messianism in the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (ed. Peter W. Flint and James C. Vanderkam with the assistance of Andrea E. Alvarez; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 2:379–402.

[97] Oegema, *Anointed*, and Pomykala, *Davidic Dynasty*, after detailed examinations of much ancient literature, also reach conclusions contrary to that represented by Collins, *Scepter and Star*.

[98] Messianism needs to be distinguished from eschatology. The eschatological expectation in the Tamid Psalms is for destruction of the wicked and the happy life of the righteous in the company of God. For a discussion of eschatology in the LXX Psalter; see Schaper, *Eschatology*, esp. 26–27.

warrior found in other psalms and by a detailed comparison with two representative psalms.[99]

The Tamid Psalms certainly contain imagery and motifs associated with warfare and violence. Psalm 24 contains several warrior epithets for Yahweh as well as a reference to creation. Psalm 48 portrays Yahweh as a source of protection through the close association of the city with God. Security is assured by the mere sight of the divine city, which terrifies attacking forces. The imagery is absent from Psalm 82, where Yahweh is judge.[100] Psalm 94 expresses confidence that Yahweh will destroy blasphemous immoral evildoers. Psalm 81 touches on the defeat of Egypt at the start of the Exodus and the promise that Yahweh in the future might destroy the enemies of Israel. Psalm 93 portrays the appearance of Yahweh in terms consistent with military prowess and also describes God's superiority over the Waters. Psalm 92 lacks warrior imagery, but does suggest the removal of enemies of both Yahweh and the speaker. Overall, the following aspects of the implementation of the imagery in the Tamid Psalms may be noted. There is no detailed description of violent activities caused by Yahweh. Hostility and response are presented in general terms, for example, as a call for God to arise or the assurance of destruction of enemies, rather than as a description of the events that occur when God rises or destroys enemies. Further, emphasis lies on the overpowering presence of Yahweh as a force for deterrence that cows the enemy without need for a violent engagement (e.g., Ps 48, 92). Exercise of Yahweh's power is most often placed in an ethical context – Yahweh will act against people who are morally reprehensible (e.g. Ps 94, cf. Ps 82). Protection of Israel is conditional upon proper behavior (Ps 81). Divine power is not exercised in an imperialistic fashion to further national ends. Interestingly, there is no ascription of present warrior activity to Yahweh; it is all in recollection or assurance.

How does this compare with warrior imagery found in the rest of the Psalter? A recent study of divine warrior imagery in the Psalter by Harold W. Ballard helps answer this question.[101] Divine warrior

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[99] A more extensive discussion can be found in Peter L. Trudinger, "The Psalms of the Tamid Service," (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 2002), 244–52.

[100] According to Robert M. Good, the jural image has primacy over the warrior; see "The Just War in Ancient Israel," *JBL* 104 (1985): 385–400.

[101] Harold W. Ballard, *The Divine Warrior Motif in the Psalms* (BibalDS 6; North

terminology is found in 85% of the psalms.[102] Given this frequency, it is hardly remarkable that it is found in the group of the seven Tamid Psalms. However, its occurrence in the Tamid Psalms differs from the norm set by other psalms. Ballard identified seven characteristics for the Divine Warrior motif: Yahweh as Divine Warrior is also judge; Yahweh is the ultimate Warrior; Yahweh is King; Yahweh supports the reign of the earthly king; Yahweh is described as the meteorological storm god; lack of action on the part of the Divine Warrior is a recurring theme; and the Warrior is also the Peacemaker in that the Warrior destroys the weapons of war.[103] In the Tamid Psalms, Yahweh is judge (Ps 82, 94), but the coupling between judge and warrior is non-existent in Ps 82 and weak in Ps 94. The description of Yahweh in the Tamid Psalms includes epithets indicating awesome power, but this does not occur in close proximity to descriptions of battles (cf. Ps 93, where power is asserted without explicit statements of victory, or Ps 48, where victory is achieved, but warrior prowess is not exhibited). Yahweh's royal nature is bluntly asserted, but not justified by descriptions of warrior activity (Ps 48 and 93). No earthly king is mentioned. No storm imagery appears. On the other hand, lack of action is a motif associated with Yahweh. Finally, there are no descriptions of the destruction of weapons of war (in fact no mention of weapons at all), although there are images of peace (Ps 92).

Ideally, these general observations should be backed up by a detailed comparison of the seven Tamid Psalms with the other 143. This is impractical. However, two psalms will be discussed, Ps 74 and 76. In his study, Ballard selected divine warrior imagery from the psalms and used this to partition the psalms into five classes based on frequency of occurrence. Psalm 76 is a representative of the class with two to five terms from divine warrior imagery, and Psalm 74 of the class with ten or more terms.[104]

Richland Hills, Tex.: Bibal Press, 1999). See also Marc Brettler, "Images of YHWH the Warrior in Psalms," *Semeia* 61 (1993): 135–65.

[102] Ballard, *Divine Warrior*, 42. Due to rounding errors, the statistics there do not add to 100%.

[103] Ballard, *Divine Warrior*, 77–79.

[104] Ballard's classes were: 1. No Divine Warrior imagery (22 psalms, including Ps 82, 92); 2. One term from the Divine Warrior imagery (28 psalms, including Ps 94); 3. Two to five terms (66 psalms, including Ps 48 and 81); 4. Six to Nine terms (19 psalms, including Ps 93); 5. Ten or more terms (15 psalms, including Ps 24). See Ballard, *Divine Warrior*, 40–42. He discussed Ps 74 (62–64) and Ps 76 (64–66).

Psalm 76, like Ps 48, is a Song of Zion. In regard to imagery of warfare, it shares with Ps 48 the image of the fear that the sight of the Lord engenders in hostile forces (v. 6), the notion of the security of Zion that God's presence brings (v. 3) and references to the victorious power of God (vv. 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13). An allusion to the Exodus victory may also be present in v. 7. God is also portrayed as judge (vv. 9, 10). Thus several motifs from the Tamid Psalms, and not only from Ps 48, appear in this psalm. However, their use in context is different. Psalm 76 devotes a significant number of verses to describing the warlike activity of Yahweh that results in victory. Yahweh in Ps 76 is active in warfare – God destroys weapons (v. 4), blasts cavalry (v. 7) or executes leaders (v. 13). This is the reverse of Ps 48, where several verses describe the security of Zion but none Yahweh's actions. In Ps 76, military violence is used not only against hostile forces but also in the service of Yahweh's role as judge. This connection is not developed in the Tamid Psalms (cf. Ps 82).

Psalm 74 contains three sections: the recollection of a past victory of God (vv. 12–15), a complaint over the current parlous situation of people and sanctuary (vv. 1–11), and a plea for intervention (vv. 20–23). Stated in such general terms, these motifs can also be found in the Tamid Psalms. However, their development in Ps 74 is quite different. The past victory in Ps 74 is that of Yahweh in a mythological battle with Sea/Leviathan. The psalm concentrates its descriptive power on the gruesome consequence of the battle, the shattering of skulls of the vanquished and their dismemberment. Nothing like this occurs in the Tamid Psalms, where description of the relationship between Yahweh and the other primordial powers is quite bland. Indeed, as has been argued in chapter 3, Ps 24 and 93 may be interpreted as depicting an association of congenial subordination and support. As for the state of God's people and sanctuary, in Ps 74 it appears that once again destruction is to be blamed on God's anger. This goes beyond Ps 81, which attributes difficulties not to the intervention of God in anger, but to the decision by Yahweh, made with sadness, to allow the people to follow their own course. Finally, the plea for intervention is based on the loss of respect suffered by Yahweh when those things associated with him do not prosper. In the Tamid Psalms, pleas for help are derived from statements of trust and confidence in the moral ordering of the cosmos.

These comparisons demonstrate that the characterization of Yahweh as warrior in the Tamid Psalms differs quantitatively and qualitatively from that expected based on the Psalter as a whole. In the Tamid Psalms, Yahweh's role as warrior is more one of passive defense than active engagement in battle; force is justified on ethical grounds rather than nationalistic ones; justice can be pursued without violence, by word alone (Ps 82); and the ascription of warrior prowess to God appears in the form of general assertions of strength and capability rather than graphic portrayals of violent and gory deeds.

One could carry on with the comparison, considering other psalms and other literature of the same approximate period, including apocalyptic works such as Daniel 7–12 or the Revelation of St John, or proximate exotic accounts such as that of Hesiod. It is likely that the same conclusion will continue to hold good, namely, that the depiction of Yahweh in the Tamid Psalms involves less overt violence than in other literature with conflict motifs.

4. *A Theme for the Collection of the Tamid Psalms*

A theme is an expression of the semantic unity of a literary work. In this section, a likely theme for the collection of the Tamid Psalms is identified and argued for. Ideally, a theme takes into account both content and structure. The manner in which these contribute to the theme varies from case to case. In particular, there is no minimum requirement on either part. A work may possess a well-defined theme even if the structure is loose, as in an anthology ordered by poet's date of birth.[105] The Tamid Psalms have some of the character of an anthology as they are formed from the reuse of existing material. Consequently, one might initially expect that its theme, if there is one, would be manifested more in content than in structure. Thus it is reasonable to begin an inquiry concerning the theme of the collection by considering its content. This is done in the present section. The contribution of the structural characteristics of the collection to the theme is treated at a later stage.

[105] On the other hand, the structure may be the primary contributor to the theme, e.g., e. e. cummings' poem "r-p-o-p-h-e-s-s-a-g-r."

The conception of theme as the semantic center of a work leads to two criteria for identifying a theme. First, if the work has semantic content, then the theme will also have content. It will say something. Thus a theme will exhibit some degree of contingency or avoidability; it will not be entirely predictable. Possible themes may be assessed on the basis of their banality, or lack thereof. Second, a theme will be expected to integrate together the significant features of content in the work. In particular, repetition of elements with congruent semantic content may point to the theme of the work. In the previous section, several motifs and agents were identified as recurring in the Tamid Psalms. The most important of these were, in brief, Yahweh, the division of humanity into righteous and wicked, worship, judgment and Zion. The theme for the collection would be expected to involve one or more of these elements.

One possibility demands immediate attention – the statement "Yahweh is king," which frequently is claimed to be the kernel of the Hebrew Bible or some part of it. For instance, Tryggve Mettinger has held that this is the root metaphor for the Old Testament, while James L. Mays found it to be the organizing center of the book of Psalms.[106] Might this statement also be central to the Tamid Psalms and the foundation of their theme?

This conjecture must be approached with caution. The meaning of the statement "Yahweh is king" is extremely vague. To make sense, its content must be further specified. If "king" is understood as a synonym for someone who possesses supremacy (one of the characteristics noted for the agent Yahweh), then the statement reduces to a credal tautology, "The primary divine being in the religion of Israel is the supreme god." The semantic content of this statement is small. It fails to unify the other motifs in the Tamid Psalms. It is a commonplace, an entirely predictable assertion, for a religion. Any worshipper present at the Tamid service would be expected to agree with it. If one wants more specificity and more content, then it is necessary to define a model of kingship that informs the interpretation of the statement.

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[106] Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, *In Search of God: The Meaning and Message of the Everlasting Names* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 92–150, esp. 92; James L. Mays, "The Centre of the Psalms," in *Language, Theology, and the Bible: Essays in Honour of James Barr* (ed. Samuel E. Balentine and John Barton; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 231–46.

For Mettinger, this model is provided by the earlier assertion, "Baal is King" and explicated through three motifs found in the Baal-Anat cycle (chaos battle, acclamation as king and palace building). The problems with this model are many – the Ugaritic material is sparse, the counter role of El as king is glossed over, no attention is paid to human institutions of kingship, and the ability of the model to encompass the depiction of Yahweh throughout the Hebrew Bible is moot, for example, with regard to later material such as Esther or Qoheleth.

Mays treats the theme under three heads: spheres of dominion, institutions of reign and activities of sovereignty. This introduces an extra level of abstraction into the discussion. In his approach, there is no concrete model of "kingship" in operation, but rather "king" is a cipher whose place might be taken equally well by another descriptive term, like "leader" or "president." Such a replacement might convey more of the sense of Mays's statement to a modern western reader, many of whom have as a model of kingship an aging female ceremonial head-of-state of a small island.

A less ambitious, and more satisfactory, approach to explicating the statement "Yahweh is King" has been made by Marc Brettler, who examined the extent to which statements made about Israelite kings in the Hebrew Bible were also applied to Yahweh.[107] His results were mixed. Some statements were applied to both agents with little variation – for example, warrior (31), long life as a predicate about eternal existence (51–53), wealth as a claim about possession of the cosmos (55–57), a palace or a royal court (100–108) – but others were not. Among the latter were many terms for strength (57–68), applied to Yahweh but not to the human king; terms about the trappings of royalty, usually not applied to Yahweh (81–87); and a lack of evidence on the role of the Israelite king as judge (109–116). Two of the missing elements are prominent in the Tamid Psalms; the terms for strength occur in Ps 24, 48 and 93, and the role of Yahweh as judge appears in Ps 94 and 82 (without the kingship metaphor). This speaks against the centrality of the metaphor "Yahweh is king" as the organizational principle in the Tamid Psalms.[108]

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[107] Marc Z. Brettler, *God Is King: Understanding an Israelite Metaphor* (JSOTSup 76; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989). Page references to this work are cited in parentheses in the text.

[108] With regard to methodology, Brettler operates with the model of kingship de-

In summary, the characterization "Yahweh is king" is not helpful in the construction of a theme for the Tamid Psalms, although the agent Yahweh is an important element of the collection.

Of the other motifs referred to above, the three of judgment, worship and division of humanity link together. None of them, however, stands out as dominant. The treatment of judgment is uneven. It does not appear at all in Ps 93 and is only near its full blown classical formulation as retribution in Ps 92 or 81. The motif of worship is common in the Psalter and likely to be part of any collection of psalms, thus failing to differentiate the Tamid Psalms from another collection. The division of humanity is subsidiary to these other two motifs.

The situation with the agent Zion is complex. It was noted before that terms associated with this agent – the city of Jerusalem, its heavenly counterpart, the mundane sanctuary, the celestial palace of God, and so on – occur throughout the Tamid Psalms and occupy a prominent position in the collection. Furthermore, allusions to this agent are avoidable. For example, there is no good reason for the inclusion of a psalm like Ps 48, a Song of Zion, in the Tamid Psalms. There are other psalms which hymn God's protective power but which do not set up a strong equation between Yahweh and Zion (e.g., Ps 3, 12, 16, 31, 34, 62, 103, and others). Similarly, one may talk about the experience of Yahweh and the reward of the pure without alluding to Zion in the way Ps 24 or 92 does (cf. Ps 1, 15). The situation with Zion is quite unlike that of references to God's superiority, whose absence or denial would be cause for comment, but whose inclusion is conventional.

Consequently, criteria of repetition and avoidability identify the agent Zion as a potentially critical element for interpretation of the Tamid Psalms. Two questions can be used to explicate its role in a theme: What happens at Zion? What is the result of these events?

What happens at Zion in the Tamid Psalms? Each psalm presents some facet of *an experience of Yahweh*. This experience is most tangible in Ps 48, in which the physical city becomes the incarnation of

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fined by the materials of the Hebrew Bible, most of which are prior to the late Second Temple period. Other models for kingship in the period of use of the Tamid Psalms are also possible. Concrete examples of kingship varied during this period – Seleucid kings, Hasmonean rulers, Roman emperors. It would be a lengthy task to determine if one of these fits the characterization of Yahweh better than another.

God, but also in which God is experienced in worship at the sanctuary and in terror by the hostile kings. In Ps 93, a glorious vision of Yahweh is seen by humans and non-human agents. Psalm 82 relates a vision of the justice of Yahweh and describes how this justice will be experienced by some heavenly beings and Ps 94 continues this as a plea to experience Yahweh's justice on earth in the lives of the righteous and the wicked and also testifies to the personal experience of the speaking voice. Worship, of course, is a form of experience of Yahweh. Worship is called for in Ps 81 by both a human speaking voice and by Yahweh. Also in that psalm, an experience of Yahweh's beneficence is promised. Worship also occurs in Ps 92, but the main encounter with Yahweh in that psalm is of fruitful life in the presence of the divine. The encounter with Yahweh is anticipated in Ps 24.

The result of these manifold experiences of Yahweh has already been touched upon. For the faithful, it is a reward of blessing or protection. For others, it is destruction. In brief, the result of the encounter is the outworking of the doctrine of retribution as it is present in the Tamid Psalms. The experience of Yahweh therefore ties together the motifs of worship, judgment and division of humanity mentioned before.

This suggests that the theme of the Tamid Psalms is the encounter with Yahweh that takes place at Jerusalem/Zion and that offers judgment in the form of requital for human needs and past behavior.

In the development of this theme in the Tamid Psalms, Jerusalem/Zion occupies a fundamental place. Why is this? An encounter with God can be conceived of as occurring almost anywhere and in the stories of the Hebrew Bible encounters do occur in various places (e.g., for Abraham, Moses, Ezekiel, etc.). Why would the Tamid Psalms tie the experience of Yahweh to Jerusalem? The answer is associated with the central status of Jerusalem in Judaism.

The city of Jerusalem occupied a strangely ambiguous place in Judaism in the late Second Temple period.[109] Its centrality cannot be denied. Always a religious center, under the Hasmoneans it became the political center of a small empire. Its prestige in the eyes of all

[109] Shaye J. D. Cohen, "The Temple and the Synagogue," in *The Early Roman Period*, vol. 3 of *The Cambridge History of Judaism* (ed. William Horbury, W. D. Davies and John Sturdy; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 307–13.

the world, not just Judaism, was enhanced by the construction of Herod's Temple. The city received practical loyalty from all the Diaspora. Jews scrupulously undertook payment of the annual Temple tax and then went beyond this with extra donations to the Temple. Pilgrimage to Jerusalem was a standard feature of Jewish life, at least by Herod's time. Indeed, the pilgrim economy was vital for the well-being of the city.[110] Jewish religious literature from the period contains clear support for Jerusalem. In the rhetoric of Maccabean writings, concern for the safety of the Temple exceeded that of concern for family (2 Macc 15:17–18; cf. 1 Macc 14:29–31; Jdt 4:2; 9:8). For Philo and the later Josephus, the city and Temple were unique.[111] The importance of the city continued among the early Christians. Paul took up a collection for inhabitants of the city from gentile converts who would have had no natural grounds for loyalty.[112] In the book of Revelation, God's rule is still centered in (the new) Jerusalem, even though the work was probably composed after the destruction of the Temple.[113]

On the other hand, there are indicators that the central status of Jerusalem as the primary place of encounter with Yahweh was by no means secure. Perhaps the clearest sign of this is the mere fact that Judaism was able to survive the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. Even before this event, however, there are signs of countermovements against the centrality of Jerusalem. Other sanctuaries existed for the worship of Yahweh. A sanctuary to Yahweh was maintained at Elephantine for hundreds of years, although it had

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[110] Martin Goodman, "The Pilgrimage Economy of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period," in *Jerusalem: Its Sanctity and Centrality to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (ed. Lee I. Levine; New York: Continuum, 1999), 69–76; see also John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 B.C.E.–117 C.E.)* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 417–19.

[111] H.-J. Klauck, "Die heilige Stadt: Jerusalem bei Philo und Lukas," *Kairos* 28 (1986): 129–51; Tessa Rajak, "The *Against Apion* and the Continuities in Josephus's Political Thought," in *Understanding Josephus: Seven Perspectives* (ed. Steve Mason; JSPSup 32; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 230. As Rajak notes, although Josephus proclaims the uniqueness of the Temple in *Antiquities*, his later work (*Ant.* 4.199–201; 12.193), he does not voice any criticism of the sanctuary at Leontopolis when he describes it in his earlier work on the Jewish revolt (*J. W.* 7.420–436; 20.236–7).

[112] E. P. Sanders, "Jerusalem and its Temple in Early Christian Thought and Practice," in Levine, *Jerusalem*, 99–100.

[113] William Klassen, "The Ascetic Way: Reflections on Peace, Justice and Vengeance in the Apocalypse of John," in *Ascetism and the New Testament* (ed. Leif E. Vaage and Vincent L. Wimbush; New York: Routledge, 1999), 399–401.

probably ceased operation by the late Second Temple period. Another temple was established at Leontopolis in the mid-second century B.C.E. and lasted beyond the fall of the Temple.[114] The attachment to Jerusalem was sufficiently weak for the Samaritans to maintain a cultic center at Shechem near Mt Gerizim for a long period of time, even prior to the schism.[115] In literature preserved by the Qumran community, there are texts which substitute a communal, spiritualized or eschatologized entity for the physical city or sanctuary.[116] These trends are also found in apocalyptic literature, where there is "a clear tradition of hostility to the [present] Temple of Jerusalem, coupled with a great concern for the Temple as a religious idea."[117] Reasons for questioning the validity of the Second Temple are not hard to find: its foundation lacked the inspiration (divine and human) of Solomon's Temple (Ezra 3:12, Haggai), it did not contain the legitimating cultic objects such as the Ark, and its desecration by Antiochus IV Epiphanes eroded its status as the place of God on earth.[118]

Competition for the religious affection of human hearts extended beyond Judaism. Jerusalem vied with other cities for political and religious status in the Hellenistic world. The depiction of the Temple in Jerusalem in terms of the metaphor of the navel of the world appears to have been an innovation of the second century B.C.E.,

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[114] Barclay, *Mediterranean Diaspora*, 35–36. According to Sidney Jellicoe, rivalry with Leontopolis was the reason for the composition of the letter of Aristeas; see Jellicoe, "The Occasion and Purpose of the Letter of Aristeas: A Re-examination," *NTS* 13 (1965–66): 144–150. The letter is counter-propaganda against attempts by supporters of the temple at Leontopolis "to alienate from Jerusalem the allegiance of Egyptian Jewry" (149–150). On Josephus's implicit acceptance of Leontopolis, see n. 111 above.

[115] John H. Hayes and Sara R. Mandel, *The Jewish People in Classical Antiquity* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 24–27.

[116] E.g., George J. Brooke, *Exegesis at Qumran: 4QFlorilegium in its Jewish Context* (JSOTSup 29; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 193; E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 B.C.E.–66 C.E.* (London: SCM, 1992), 376–77.

[117] Robert G. Hamerton-Kelly, "The Temple and the Origins of Jewish Apocalyptic," *VT* 20 (1970): 1.

[118] Cohen, "Temple and Synagogue," 307–11. Jörg Frey suggests that the rival temples were established for political motives and not out of schismatic religious impulses; see Frey, "Temple and Rival Temple," in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel: Community without Temple* (ed. Beate Ego, Armin Lange and Peter Pilhofer; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 171–204. From this standpoint, the Tamid Psalms may be viewed as a political response affirming the uniqueness of Jerusalem and so upholding the status of the priestly group controlling the Temple.

motivated by similar claims about the temple at Delphi and providing convenient legitimatization of the territorial expansion of the Hasmoneans whose political center was Jerusalem.[119] With the later transfer of political power under Roman government from Jerusalem to Caesarea, the question of status would have become more pressing and the need to stress the religious centrality of Jerusalem more vital.[120]

Thus there were political, religious and economic factors in the late Second Temple period that would encourage those with an interest in Jerusalem and its Temple to assert actively the centrality of the city in the face of opposing trends.[121] The connection made in the Tamid Psalms between Zion and the encounter with Yahweh may be viewed in this light. A gauche modern parallel might be made with the way contemporary theme parks associate themselves with popular, often cartoon, characters in order to attract visitors. The presence of Zion/Jerusalem in the Tamid Psalms advertised, almost subliminally, that this was the place where the authentic experience of Yahweh might be had. Seen in this light, references to Zion in the Tamid Psalms, although apparently contingent, are functionally an essential part of their theme.

5. *The Question of an Organizing Principle for the Collection*

Inferences about the structure and theme of the Tamid Psalms made prior to this point imply there was a fair degree of purposiveness in

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[119] Philip S. Alexander, "Jerusalem as the Omphalos of the World: On the History of a Geographical Concept," in Levine, *Jerusalem*, 104–10.

[120] For a discussion of the ebb and flow of the religious and political centrality of the Temple, see Cohn, *Shape*, 70–79, and Doron Mendels, "The Temple in the Hellenistic Period and in Judaism," in *Sacred Space: Shrine, City, Land: Proceedings from the International Conference in Memory of Joshua Prawer Held in Jerusalem, June 8–13, 1992* (ed. Benjamin Z. Kedar and R. J. Zwi Werblowsky; New York: New York University Press, 1998), 77–82.

[121] Another factor emerges in some observations by Jonathan Z. Smith. Unlike other shrines or sacred places, the Temple has no underlying biblical aetiology. "It could, in principle, have been built anywhere else and still have been the same." As a result of the contingency of its location, the Temple was "the focus of a complex self-referential system" in its cult. The risk here is that, being all system and independent of location, the Temple could become cut off from the dynamic flow of the religion elsewhere, like a billabong from the river, and so be reduced to the status of an irrelevant curio. See Smith, *To Take Place: Toward a Theory in Ritual* (CSJH; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 83–86, 108, quotes are from 83–84.

the editorial shaping of the collection. That conclusion will be pushed further in this section. The aim now will be to seek an organizing principle for this set of psalms, that is, an explanation for the shape of the collection as a whole that accounts for the selection of any specific psalm for its place in the sequence. Some organizing principles have been suggested in the past. The adequacy of these will be examined first, and then a new proposal for an organizational principle will be advanced, one that incorporates the foregoing conclusions about structure and theme.

5.1 *Previous Theories*

Explanations for the shape of the collection have tended to follow one of two courses: either referring to some pattern external to the collection as a guide for the arrangement of the psalms or positing an internal principle that emerges from the consideration of the content and structure of the seven psalms themselves. The oldest explanation ties the order to a common external pattern. In a Jewish tradition preserved in the Gemara to the tractate *Rosh HaShanah* in the Babylonian Talmud, it is asserted that the seven Tamid Psalms correspond to the seven days of creation (*Rosh HaSh.* 31a). The tractate gives reasons for their choice:

Day 1	Ps 24	because he [God] took possession and gave possession and became ruler of his world.
Day 2	Ps 48	because he divided his works and reigned over them.
Day 3	Ps 82	because he revealed the earth in his wisdom and established the world for his community.
Day 4	Ps 94	because he created the sun and the moon and some day he will bring retribution upon those who serve them.
Day 5	Ps 81	because he created birds and fishes to praise his name.
Day 6	Ps 93	because he finished his works and reigned over them.
Day 7	Ps 92	for the day that is entirely Sabbath. . . . Said R. Nehemiah . . . because he rested.[122]

Circumstantial support for this principle of organization might be found in the report in the Mishnah that the daily readings prescribed for the those in the *Maʿamad* who did not travel to Jerusalem at their

[122] For the full text and translation, see Maurice Simon, *Rosh Hashanah* (Hebrew-English Edition of the Babylonian Talmud; ed. I. Epstein; London: Soncino, 1983).

rostered time included the sequence of creation days in Gen 1 (*m. Taʿan.* 4.3).[123]

A correspondence between the Tamid Psalms and the days of creation is often taken by scholars as established and even as something that would have been widely known in the late Second Temple period.[124] Yet this is far from certain. The connection may be artificial, inspired quite understandably by creative speculation about the relationship between two sequences of seven, originating perhaps after the close of the Second Temple period among those who did not know the original rationale for the choice. There are, in fact, two cogent objections to the talmudic association of the Tamid Psalms with Gen 1.

First, the explanations given in the Gemara on tractate *Rosh Hashanah*, while clearly acceptable to talmudic sages, sit rather awkwardly with more modern critical approaches. On close inspection, the proposed connections appear rather forced. Birds and fishes, for example, do not occur in Ps 81, nor is praise an attribute mentioned at their creation (Gen 1:20–23). The explanation for the second day, concerning division and reigning as king, could as easily apply to Ps 93 as Ps 48. From the exposition in Gen 1:24–31, it would be more natural to connect the sixth day with the establishment of human authority over creation, rather than the reign of God. The connection between the sixth day and Ps 93 is thus quite tenuous. It is hard to fathom why, if one was starting out with a blank slate, one would link Ps 24 with the first day of creation (light and darkness, Gen 1:3–5) in preference to the third (earth and vegetation, Gen 1:9–13) or even, in a pinch, the second (Gen 1:6–8). Likewise the links between Ps 82 and the third day and Ps 94 and the fourth are obscure. The Sabbath psalm is interpreted as a reference to the

[123] The correspondence is not perfect as there was no reading or gathering on the Sabbath. The sixth and seventh days, Gen 1:24–2:1, were read on Friday.

[124] For example, an association between the Tamid Psalms and the days of creation forms a crucial part of the explanation for the ordering of the psalms in 11QPs[a] given by Roger T. Beckwith, "The Qumran Psalter: The Courses of the Levites and the Use of the Psalms At Qumran," in *Calendar and Chronology, Jewish and Christian* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 141–66, repr. with minor alterations of "The Courses of the Levites and the Eccentric Psalms Scrolls," *RevQ* 11 (1984): 499–524. Others doubt the validity of the connection; see, e.g., Michael Maher, "The Psalms in Jewish Worship," *PIBA* 17 (1994): 13; Gerard F. Willems, "Les Psaumes dans la liturgie juive," *Bijdr* 51 (1990): 403–4.

eschatological Sabbath, an interpretation that fits better with the content of the psalm than a connection with the primordial Sabbath.

Second, there is scant evidence in earlier or contemporary Jewish writings to support connection of the Tamid Psalms with the days of creation. Indeed, in *Midrash Tehillim*, roughly contemporary with the Talmud, a connection between the daily psalms and creation is not made.[125] Quite the opposite, in fact. The midrash on Ps 24, prompted by v. 1, ponders the identification of the day on which the host of heaven were created (§4). Various opinions are cited – the second day, the fifth day – before a rabbi is quoted as stating that *all agree it was not the first day*. In this tradition there is a strong tendency to distance Ps 24 from the first day of creation. References to creation occur in the midrashim on the weekday psalms, but in no case is there any awareness of the talmudic association of these psalms with the particular days of creation.[126] The midrash on Ps 92 contains extensive discussion of the Sabbath, mostly prompted by the superscription. The emphasis is on the inadequacy of creation (§2) and in particular on the fall and expulsion of Adam (§§3–6). The reward of the righteous in the world to come is briefly mentioned (§§8, 11). The connections here with the talmudic explanation appear more fortuitous than phylogenic.

The silence of the midrashim has a cumulative force. It is odd that no reference to a connection between the Tamid Psalms and the corresponding days of creation is found in *Midr. Teh.* if that connection was early and well known in Palestine. The most likely conclusion then is the opposite – that the talmudic relationship between the Tamid Psalms and the seven days of creation is *post facto* and not the original organizational principle.

This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that some later Jewish commentators, notably Rashi, did not follow the explanation given in *b. RoshHaSh.*[127] Rashi, and others after him, explained the collection

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[125] For a translation of the *Midr. Teh*, see William G. Braude, *The Midrash on the Psalms* (2 vols.; YJS 13; New Haven: Yale University, 1959).

[126] The midrash on Ps 24 also refers to the creation of the Sabbath and Israel (§3). The midrash on Ps 82 mentions the eviction of Adam (§3). The midrash on Ps 93 contains some references to Gen 1:2, 9 with regard to the creation of the waters, but not the sixth day (§§2, 5). The midrashim on Ps 48, 81 and 94 contain no overt references to days of creation.

[127] On Rashi and the commentators who follow him, see Liebreich, "Psalms of the Levites," 170.

as reflecting the depressed mood of the late Second Temple period, when Israel was dominated by foreign powers and beset by internal disturbances. This explanation is itself unsatisfying. Three objections may be made to it. First, it is only a partial explanation – it deals with the mood of the psalms, but does not consider matters of structure, order or the internal relationships between psalms and motifs. Second, it does not apply equally to all of the psalms – Ps 24, 48 and 93, for example, have a positive tone. Third, the story of Israel as presented in the biblical literature (especially the books of history and of the prophets) is of such a nature that there is scarcely any period after the division of the kingdom for which one could not make a case that foreign and domestic issues might create a mood of anxiety or depression.[128]

Rashi's analysis of the mood of the Tamid Psalms has been turned on its head by the modern scholar Yehudah A. Liebreich, who, in effect, sees the Tamid Psalms as a constructive reaction against tumultuous times.[129] Liebreich decides that the Tamid Psalms have a didactic and a consoling purpose. They provide a guide for human life that encourages moral behavior in spite of current difficulties. According to Liebreich, the first psalm presents the ideal human behavior, honesty and righteousness; the second assures the people that God guards Jerusalem; the middle three psalms focus on the dangers of existence – Ps 82 concerns the moral dangers facing the world; Ps 94 the dangers facing an individual, dangers created by morally corrupt people; and Ps 81 the dangers facing the people due to their own disobedience – and the final two psalms offer words of consolation about the security of the earth and the reward of the righteous.

Liebreich's study has much to commend it. He recognizes the importance of examining connections between the psalms and takes seriously the question of coherence of the whole. There is little doubt that moral encouragement and consolation would flow from the collection. However, as discussion of the motifs and themes has shown, there is more than this in the Tamid Psalms. Liebreich overly concentrates on the moral aspects of human behavior and passes too quickly over the other agents, Yahweh and Zion, their actions, and

[128] For instance, Cheyne and Graetz give conflicting dates, see ch. 2 n. 106.
[129] Liebreich, "Psalms of the Levites."

the motif of encounter. He overlooks the disjunction in the structure of the collection between Ps 93 and 92. His thesis fails to include an adequate rationale for the order of the psalms. If the aim is encouragement, why, for example, place Ps 48 before Ps 82, 94 and 81? Would not the impact of this psalm be heightened if it followed the presentation of the dangers (cf. Ps 48:9)? Thus it is reasonable to seek a more inclusive explanation than that given by Liebreich.

In recent times, Henry Plantin has proposed a theory as to the origin of the Tamid Psalms based on connections with external factors.[130] Plantin's explanation is quite detailed. It is evolutionary. He splits the daily psalms into two groups, argues for the origins of these groups and then for the rationale of their union as Tamid Psalms. The external patterns that he posits for the underlying logic of the collection are mythological and historical.

First Plantin substitutes Ps 97 for Ps 82 (49–50). He splits the emended collection of seven psalms into two groups: Ps 81 and 94, as psalms used during the days of Sukkoth (according to *b. Sukkah* 55a), and Ps 24, 48, 97, 93 and 92, which form the core of the daily psalms (51–52, 62). The common elements that unite the group Ps 24, 48, 97, 93 and 92 are motifs drawn from the mythology of the chaos battle (52–62). These two groups originated at different times in the preexilic period (62–69), but the combination of the two groups into the daily psalms happened much later. Psalm 92 was adopted for the Sabbath in the early postexilic period, and the other psalms became daily psalms shortly after the Maccabean restoration of Temple worship (70–76).

Plantin's arguments contain serious flaws. The substitution of Ps 97 for Ps 82 should be rejected.[131] The grouping of the emended collection is also suspect. The subtraction of the psalms for the Sukkoth does not *a priori* imply that their complement in the daily psalms must also form a group that possesses some coherence, liturgical or otherwise, independent of their use in the daily service. His case for the thematic unity of the two subgroups and the historical circumstances that gave rise to them founders at several points. In the larger group of Ps 24, 48, 93, 92 (and 97), Plantin finds ele-

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[130] Henry Plantin, "Leviternas veckodagspsalmer i templet," *SEÅ* 48 (1983): 48–76. Page references to Plantin's essay will be placed in parentheses in the text. A more extensive discussion of this essay may be found in Trudinger, "Psalms," 266–272.

[131] See ch. 2.5.

ments drawn from a myth describing a battle between Yahweh and the forces of chaos that results in the assumption of kingship by Yahweh and the construction of a palace-temple. The myth, of course, is not found complete anywhere in the Hebrew Bible. It is not "told" in the daily psalms; the purported allusions to the myth do not appear in their archetypal order but are distributed somewhat randomly over the week. What is more, the allusions in the psalms that Plantin associates with the myth can be given other explanations (e.g., Ps 93:3–4 as praise, not defeat), and more tellingly, there are many other motifs in the psalms (e.g., encounter, retribution, persecution of the righteous and worship) that Plantin does not consider.

Associations made by Plantin between psalms and events in the history of Israel are questionable. In essence, his method is to highlight some feature of a period and show how a line in a psalm might reference this.[132] He finds allusions in the daily psalms to events in the Maccabean rebellion and the subsequent restoration of Temple worship. For example, Ps 48:5–9 can be read as an allusion to victory of the Maccabean forces over foreign oppressors (1 Macc 3:52, 58; 7:40–42; 12:13; 14:13), and Ps 81 was chosen because of the connection between v. 7 and the yoke of suffering under foreign domination (1 Macc 1:11–15, 64; 13:41). He justifies this methodology by reference to Ps 30. This psalm, whose superscription indicates it is for the dedication of the Temple, was used, he asserts, as the song when the altar was consecrated in 164 B.C.E. (1 Macc 4:52–56, cf. *Sof.* 18.2). Now, Plantin argues, there is nothing in the psalm that bears on Temple or altar consecration. Hence, he concludes, the connection must lie elsewhere, namely in the motif of rescue from distress inflicted after apostasy, a motif found elsewhere in 1 Macc. This example of allusion of motifs provides the model for connecting other psalms to circumstances described in the books of Maccabees.[133] However his interpretation of Ps 30, while

[132] His methodology is reminiscent of that of Moses Buttenwieser, *The Psalms: Chronologically Treated with a New Translation* (1938; repr. LBS; New York: KTAV, 1969).

[133] Plantin further argues that the LXX superscriptions of the psalms date from approximately the same time as the Maccabees and so the associations they create must be between psalm content and recent events. The date of the superscriptions, however, is an open issue, see ch. 2.5.

innovative, is unconvincing. The psalm is sufficiently vague and varied in content that its connection with dedication could be explained in other ways, for example, its emphasis on life-long praise and worship suits the role of the Temple as the center of praise and worship.

The links formed by Plantin are rather arbitrary; indeed, one might suspect it would be possible to link any of the 150 psalms to some line or event in the books of Maccabees. Further, if historical events were the motivation for the creation of the corpus of daily psalms in the second century, one wonders why succeeding generations did not vary the psalms in order to better match their new historical circumstances (such as incorporation in the Roman empire or construction of Herod's Temple).

Plantin's study, despite its wealth of detail, is to be rejected as an explanation for the choice and arrangement of the Tamid Psalms.

None of the theories examined in this section has proved adequate to explain the rationale underlying the collection and organization of the Tamid Psalms. Liebreich possibly comes the closest, and, interestingly, he is the commentator who is most sensitive to the connections between separate psalms and movement from the start to the end of the week. The interrelations and flow come to the fore in the following sections as a new proposal for the organizational principle for the Tamid Psalms is developed.

5.2 *Orientation – Disorientation – New Orientation*

Walter Brueggemann has created a scheme for classification of psalms based on the hermeneutical insights of Paul Ricoeur concerning the effect of a text upon its reader. In this section, this classification will be applied to the Tamid Psalms.

According to Ricoeur, a text can create a redescription of reality. Unlike a conversation, which is tied to a particular situation, the text is free to create its own quasi-world.[134] This world is not hidden in the mind of the author or in the structure of the text, but lies "in front of the text" and is accessible to anyone who reads the

[134] Paul Ricoeur, "What Is a Text? Explanation and Understanding," in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation* (ed. and trans. John B. Thompson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 149.

text.[135] It is a fiction, in the sense that it presents a different possibility for describing reality. In interpreting a text, one accepts the possibilities opened up in the quasi-world and follows the "hermeneutical arc" indicated by the text.[136] An essential point in this process is that the world described by the text is not identical with the world as experienced by the interpreter. The text is similar to a metaphor, which attributes some new and initially contradictory meaning to something previously thought to be understood.[137] The contradiction in the metaphor is resolved by readjusting the meanings of the words. In this way, a metaphor can create new meaning. In a text, the discrepancy between the world described by the text and the world experienced by the reader sets up a tension that results in disorientation. The text challenges and breaks down the model of reality held by the reader (disorientation) and opens the way to replace that model with a modified one (re-orientation). The process is one of "re-orientation by disorientation."[138] "The metaphorical process . . . 'transposes' or 'transfers' the meaning of the story from fiction to reality."[139] In language, a new metaphor soon becomes commonplace, and its redescriptive power withers. Ricoeur suggests this does not necessarily hold true for texts. The new orientation is not final, and the text can continue to challenge the view of reality.

In Brueggemann's appropriation of Ricoeur's hermeneutic, a psalm may be placed in one of three categories – orientation, disorientation or new orientation – depending on which function of the hermeneutical process is dominant in the psalm.[140] A psalm of orientation expresses a state of harmony and contentedness with life and the world. Such psalms might refer to joy and goodness and the continuing reliability of God and creation. They neither anticipate nor remember change. Into this category Brueggemann places Claus Westermann's class of descriptive hymns.[141] When change

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[135] Paul Ricoeur, "Metaphor and the Central Problem of Hermeneutics," in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, 177–79.

[136] Ricoeur, "What is a Text?," 159, 164.

[137] Paul Ricoeur, "Biblical Hermeneutics," *Semeia* 4 (1975): 80.

[138] Ricoeur, "Biblical Hermeneutics," 114.

[139] Ricoeur, "Biblical Hermeneutics," 34, see also 75–88

[140] Walter Brueggemann, "Psalms and the Life of Faith: A Suggested Typology of Function," *JSOT* 17 (1980): 3–32; idem, *The Message of the Psalms: A Theological Commentary* (AOTS; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984).

[141] For Westermann's classes, see Claus Westermann, *The Praise of God in the Psalms* (trans. Keith R. Crim; Richmond, Va.: John Knox, 1965).

comes and the old view of the world collapses, then a psalm of disorientation or dislocation is raised. These are typically laments. Finally, through disorientation comes a reorientation, expressed by psalms of new orientation.[142] These speak of the new situation in a language of surprise. Westermann's class of declarative hymns and songs of thanksgiving belong to this category, since "these do not *describe* what has been, but *assert* what has just been wrought."[143]

Each of the Tamid Psalms can be classified according to Brueggemann's three categories. Brueggemann provides the classification for three of them: Psalm 24 is a psalm of orientation; Psalm 81 of disorientation, and Psalm 93 of new orientation.[144] Lament dominates Ps 94 and so this is a psalm of disorientation.[145] The sentiments expressed in Psalm 82 are also of suffering and alienation, so it too is a psalm of disorientation. According to Westermann, Psalm 92 is a psalm of declarative praise, so it falls into the category of new orientation.[146] Classification of Psalm 48 is less obvious. Westermann sees vv. 3–9 of this hymn as a song of victory, an example of a psalm of declarative praise.[147] However, the rest of the psalm speaks of the reliability of God and assumes the continuity of the status quo. For this reason, it may be classified as a psalm of orientation. With these classifications, the sequence of Tamid Psalms has the distribution: Orientation (Sunday, Monday), disorientation (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday), and new orientation (Friday, Sabbath). Thus, within Brueggemann's categories, the sequence of the Tamid Psalms appears to follow the dynamics of hermeneutical experience, moving from a contented view of the world, through trauma, to a new vision of reality. At a psychological level, which is where Brueggemann's classification scheme is best located, the pattern, orientation-disorientation-new orientation provides a partial explanation for the organization of the Tamid Psalms.[148]

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[142] Brueggemann used the term "reorientation" for such psalms in the initial sketch of his classification, "Psalms and the Life" and replaced this with "new orientation" in *Message*.

[143] Brueggemann, "Psalms and Life," 9.

[144] Brueggemann, *Message*, 42, 92, 146.

[145] The genre of Ps 94 was discussed in ch. 3.

[146] Westermann, *Praise of God*, 105, 111–12.

[147] Westermann, *Praise of God*, 92–93.

[148] Brueggemann's classification, while motivated by Ricoeur's theory, actually distorts that theory. Ricoeur does not hold that one text may invoke reorientation

In the discussion of the relationships between the Tamid Psalms, the conclusion was drawn that the Tamid Psalms of themselves as a literary group, possess a start (Ps 24), an end (Ps 92) and strong literary connections between consecutive members of the sequence. Analysis according to Brueggemann's scheme now adds to this an evolution in emotional mood or psychological state from the start to the end. There is thus a teleology internal to the sequence of the Tamid Psalms. This teleology is present at the psychological level. Can it be discerned elsewhere? Brueggemann's classification does not take into account the specific content of each psalm. The next step is to see if there is a corresponding evolution or progress in the description of agents, actions or motifs in the Tamid Psalms.[149]

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and another text disorientation, rather, both movements are engendered by the one and the same text. The text redescribes reality in a way that differs from the description held by the reader. This disorients, but at the same time, by interacting with the world of the text, the reader's understanding of reality is changed, and so reorientation takes place. A descriptive hymn can be just as disorienting as a lament. It describes a world of abundant goodness that does not correspond to experience. The description often appears exaggerated and in itself has the capacity to cause reorientation. "Re-orientation by disorientation" is a function possessed by each of the seven daily psalms, and also by the new text comprised of the conjunction of the seven. A critical exposition of Brueggemann's approach may be found in Harry P. Nasuti, *Defining Sacred Songs: Genre, Tradition and the Post-Critical Interpretation of the Psalms* (JSOTSup 218; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 57–127. Among the many criticisms made by Nasuti, two are relevant here – that Brueggemann remains tied "to what he sees as the psalms original settings in ancient Israel" (97), and that Brueggemann lacks "a full sense of the cult as present *experience* which has a decisive effect on its participants" (107). Both are pertinent to the case of the Tamid Psalms. In ch. 5, the psalms are located in their cultic setting in the Second Temple period, not ancient Israel, and their relation to the experience of the worshippers is investigated.

[149] In 1908, Arnold van Gennep published an influential analysis of rituals associated with changes in situation or life social worlds; see van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960). Van Gennep divided such rituals into three types, separation (pre-liminal), transition (liminal), and incorporation (post-liminal). The Tamid Psalms, taken in order, loosely correspond to this sequence, with Ps 24 expressing separation from the world (for the pilgrim), and Ps 92 incorporation into the world of the Temple, while the transitional state evolves in the intervening psalms. Thus van Gennep's insights on the rites of passage may be applied to theorize about the change in situation of a worshipper following the psalms through the whole week. Such a worshipper would feel a closer association with Yahweh and the Temple by the final Sabbath of the week. Brueggemann's scheme has the advantage of being stated specifically in relation to the psalms.

5.3 *The Tamid Psalms as Narrative*

"A narrative is a story, whether told in prose or verse, involving events, characters and what the characters do and say."[150] In this section, it will be argued that the Tamid Psalms form a narrative presentation of the encounter with God at Zion.

The most common vehicle for narrative is a prose composition in which the story is told by a narrator. By far the largest proportion of material in the Hebrew Bible falls into this category. As opening quote shows, literary theorists recognize the presence of narrative in other forms, including drama and poetry, where the role of the narrator is suppressed and narrative elements may be implicit.[151] Robert Alter has analyzed ways in which a story may be imbedded in Hebrew poetry.[152] He observes, amongst other things, that verse narrative is frequently "a sequence of overlapping actions" in which "narrative movement forward in time is typically generated by the establishing of a series of linked actions" so that "a sense of temporal progression is thus produced in a manner analogous to the illusion of movement created in the cinema" through the rapid display of successive still images on the movie film.[153] In many cases, the story line is not explicit but may be inferred from the description of actions or events or from the dialogue.

In keeping with the analogy of a movie in which minute changes in the image occur over small time scales, Alter emphasized the narrative movement created by subtle changes in description from one member of a parallel construction to the next. However, he also recognized that verse narrative can contain grosser time scales, such as the period from Exodus to Conquest embedded in the Song of the Sea (Exod 15:1–18).[154] Larger time scales are appropriate to analysis of the Tamid Psalms as a narrative. The overlaps and links between frames are precisely the connections between consecutive Tamid Psalms examined above in Section 2.1.

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[150] This sentence begins the entry on "Narrative and Narratology" in M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (7th ed.; Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace, 1999), 173–74.

[151] For a discussion of the narrator as an agent in the narrative, see Mieke Bal, *On Story Telling: Essays in Narratology* (FF; Sonoma, California: Polebridge, 1991), esp. p. 89.

[152] Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 27–61.

[153] Alter, *Biblical Poetry*, 40, 39.

[154] Alter, *Biblical Poetry*, 50–55.

Narrative theory has gathered a large retinue of techniques and technical terms. Two basic concepts are that of plot and story. The story is "the bare synopsis of the temporal order of what happens."[155] Story becomes plot when the events and characters (along with what they say and do) are provided with a connective tissue of causes and motivations, and organized in accord with a teleology aimed at producing certain emotional or artistic effects.[156] Event and character are intertwined; characterization can be developed through explication of the response to events, and conversely the evolution of events is effected by the nature of the character. In all but the most radical writings, the plot involves in an essential way some element of change, whether in external circumstances or internal state of the major characters.

In this section, the story embedded in the Tamid Psalms is laid out explicitly and then expanded into a plot using, as much as possible, observations on cause and motivation found in the Tamid Psalms themselves. In addition, development in the two major characters, Yahweh and the righteous, is observed. This plot is tied to the structural and thematic analyses made previously. The goal is a demonstration that the organizational principle of the Tamid Psalms is formed by the plot, as a dynamic exposition of the theme, or, equivalently, of the theme as a static portrayal of the plot.

The major structural principle in the Tamid Psalms is the sequential links between consecutive psalms. If one reads the psalms in sequence and distills the implied events from descriptions and dialogue, the following story line emerges: Psalm 24 introduces two characters, Yahweh and those who seek Yahweh (glossed hereafter as the righteous).[157] These two characters are on the move. Ps 48 shows these two meeting in Zion, Yahweh's city from where the earth is ruled. The interaction between the two is a happy one. The

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[155] Abrams, *Glossary*, 224.

[156] On plot, see Abrams, *Glossary*, 224–28. On the role of causality and change, see, e.g., E. M. Forster, "The Plot," 1927; repr. in *Approaches to the Novel: Materials for a Poetics* (ed. Robert E. Scholes; rev. ed.; San Francisco: Chandler, 1966), 219–32; R. S. Crane, "The Concept of Plot," 1952; repr. in Scholes, *Approaches to the Novel*, 233–43; Norman Friedman, "Forms of the Plot," 1955; repr. in *The Theory of the Novel* (ed. Norman Stevick; London: Free Press, 1967), 145–66.

[157] The righteous, like the hero of a medieval morality play, is a "flat" character, see E. M. Forster, "Flat and Round Characters," 1927; repr. in Stevick, *Theory of the Novel*, 223–31.

scene in Ps 82 narrows to a certain location in the heavenly city, namely the court of Yahweh, and Yahweh is seen going about the business of governing the cosmos. In this scene, some heavenly beings are being condemned for misrule of earth. Psalm 94 returns to earth and shows the effects of this maladministration – one group of humans is oppressing the righteous. The response of the righteous is to adopt a faithful attitude of trust in Yahweh. Psalm 81 also refers to the situation of oppression and the attitude of the righteous, but now it is revealed that the (so-called) righteous have not been worshipping Yahweh as they ought, and that this is the reason for the problems they face on earth. Another shift of scene occurs in Ps 93, which is a depiction of heavenly praise of Yahweh. Yahweh in this psalm stands above the confusion of the world and establishes a regulated order. So by Ps 92, the problems have been resolved. The oppressors have perished and the righteous spend their days in praise in the company of Yahweh.

This synopsis can be expanded into a much fuller description of the plot of the Tamid Psalms. Psalm 24 introduces two characters, Yahweh and those who seek Yahweh. Some information is given about these two. Yahweh controls the cosmos by virtue of being its creator and is also a powerful warrior. Those who seek Yahweh possess certain moral qualities and devote themselves to the worship of Yahweh. There is an expectation that Yahweh will reward these righteous ones in some way. In Ps 24, both parties are travelling. The righteous are seen toiling up the holy mountain towards the Temple of Yahweh. Yahweh in turn is about to enter some city. In the psalm, the city is not explicitly identified. It is not revealed until the next psalm that it is Zion. On its own, Ps 24 leaves open the question of whether the paths of the two parties, Yahweh and those who seek God, will intersect. The motivations for the two parties are not stated. Do the righteous seek Yahweh because it is intrinsically proper for creatures to seek and worship their creator, or do they act out of some hope of reward?

The setting for the next psalm, Ps 48, is Zion. The close association of Yahweh with that city reveals this was the destination alluded to in Ps 24. Hence the paths of the seekers in Ps 24 and God intersect at Zion. The scene is altogether a happy one. The righteous tour the city in praise and worship of Yahweh. The language of the psalm suggests that an experience of the city is like a meeting with God, in this sense fulfilling the hope of encounter anticipated in Ps

24. The worshippers enjoy the security that comes from being in the presence of the most powerful God. Is this the promised blessing of Ps 24:6? Just as the city is secure, the relationship between God and people appears in this psalm as unshakable and eternal.

The dual nature of Zion as earthly and heavenly city forms the basis for the scene shift between Ps 48 and Ps 82. A worshipper standing in the Temple (Ps 48:10) is also standing in the heavenly court and so in a position to overhear the proceedings.[158] At this point, the tone of the story darkens slightly and the hint of a complication appears on the horizon. The court proceedings reveal there has been dereliction in heaven and as a result suffering on earth. All cannot be as happy as Ps 48 made out. However a positive note is sounded. Yahweh is seen as acting to rectify matters in heaven. The requirement for justice is part of the divine nature. The earth, however, still needs repair (Ps 82:5, 8). The closing verse of the psalm draws attention back to the earthly context.

The lament for Wednesday, Ps 94, brings the plot complication to the fore. It turns out that suffering on earth is being born by the righteous at the hands of those who do not seek Yahweh, those who scoff at God's authority. Frightening vignettes portray the extent of the malfeasance. The current situation stands in stark contrast to the happy images of security in Ps 48. However, the response of the righteous as enunciated by the speaking voice remains one of faith. The speaker expresses confidence that Yahweh will act and trouble will pass. The righteous do not abandon worship of Yahweh in the face of adversity.

In light of this response, it is fitting then that the following psalm, Ps 81, opens with a call to worship based on obedience to God's commands. Worship, however, becomes the setting for denunciation. It is now revealed that those who claim to be faithful are not worshipping as they should be. Instead of having a pure heart (בר לבב, Ps 24:4), they have a stubborn heart (בשׁרירות לבם, Ps 81:13). Their suffering is directly attributable to their unfaithfulness. This revelation introduces another complication into the plot. The righteous, so-called, are responsible for the troubles they have been blaming on others. If the righteous reform, their troubles will cease.

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[158] Psalm 48 prepares for Ps 82 in three ways: The worshipper is standing in the Temple (48:10); Yahweh's nature is just (Ps 48:11c); and Yahweh rules from Zion (Ps 48:12c).

Another scene shift occurs with Ps 93. This psalm presents a vision of Yahweh as the powerful and glorious ruler of the universe. Earth is no longer threatened by instability (Ps 93:2) as it was previously (Ps 82:5), but has returned to its original security (Ps 24:1). Consequently, the threat of injustice must have passed, although the psalm is strangely silent on the way in which the complications were resolved. Humans do not feature in this psalm. Rather, praise to Yahweh is given by the waters which in the story world of the Tamid Psalms are the faithful servants of Yahweh and the foundations of the created order, not vanquished enemies as in another tradition. Their praise stands in contrast to the disobedience of other superhuman entities in Ps 82 and is another indication that the created order has been set right.

The Sabbath psalm makes resolution of the crisis explicit. The so-called righteous are now by nature truly righteous. Their worship is no longer faulty, as in Ps 81, but directed in perpetual praise towards God. Their persecutors and God's enemies are now gone, as promised in Ps 81:15–16. The seekers of God are no longer pilgrims to and around God's holy mountain (as in Ps 24 and 48), but permanent, well-rooted residents of the heavenly precincts. They flourish under God's care and in God's presence. This must be the true realization of the blessing anticipated in Ps 24.

In modern dramatic serializations, it is common to end each episode with an unresolved issue, whose purpose is to hook the audience and create the urge to return for the next episode. To some extent, the Tamid Psalms also exhibit this form. Psalm 24 leaves open the question of whether the two characters will meet. Will the seekers find God? Psalm 48 raises the question of whether the festal security is the fulfillment of the reward promised in Ps 24. At the close of Ps 82, the reader is left wondering what is happening on earth and what God will do about it. This question persists through Ps 94 and 81. The need for God to act is made more intense by Ps 94. Psalm 81 introduces a new plot twist – will the people reform and so open the way for action on God's part? Psalm 93 delays the answer to this question, but in its presentation of God's undiminished glory hints there may be a resolution. The question is ultimately answered by Ps 92.

Psalm 92, in its turn, can be seen as laying a groundwork for the repetition of the sequence the following week. The vision of vitality in it serves as an inspiration for people to seek Yahweh, thus prepar-

ing for the pilgrimage in Ps 24, and the final location of God, on high, suggests the need for Yahweh to travel out into the world to meet the worshippers ascending the mountain.

The lacuna in this plot occurs at Ps 93. Where one might expect a psalm that describes the reformation of the people and the victory of God over their persecutors (Ps 81:15–16), one finds rather a hymn of praise with no human characters. Is this a weakness in the plot? Perhaps not. As was mentioned above, the psalm delays the presentation of the final outcome of the story, and in a dramatic sense heightens the tension in the story at the point of crisis. The notion that there would be some ultimate eschatological event in which the forces of good defeat the forces of evil and initiate a paradisical period on earth was common in the Second Temple period. The literature contains many detailed expositions of this story (e.g., Dan 11–12). The Tamid Psalms do not travel this route. They express confidence that there will be a resolution, but leave open the details of how this will come about. This is an artistic ploy that maintains a sense of mystery and anticipation in the onlooker. It is also eminently pragmatic. Other stories of resolution were often told from a partisan or sectarian stance. The Tamid Psalms steer a course of silence between factions. They glorify God, encourage piety and reform, and promise rewards, but offend no-one, not even the foreign overlords. This is a course appropriate for the central sanctuary of a religion encompassing a diversity of views and subject to unsympathetic external intervention.

The two primary characters in this plot are Yahweh and the righteous. Their characterization is not static, but develops with the narrative, in each case passing through a point of tension to resolution. Just as plot and character are intertwined, so the progressive explication of character in the Tamid Psalms is the counterpart of the exposition of the plot. The key attribute in this drama of personalities is faithfulness, of Yahweh and of the righteous.

For Yahweh, it is a question of faithfulness as reliability. The opening psalms (Ps 24 and 48) present the classic description of Yahweh: creator of world, controller of world, adept warrior, reliable defender of those who associate themselves with God, upholder of the standards of justice, and in appearance glorious, indeed overpowering. With such a deity, the world is filled with security for the seekers of God who live under God's care. The next psalm (Ps 82) appears to follow this precedent, in its presentation of Yahweh the divine

ruler chastising and punishing heavenly beings who have supported injustice. However, a discordant note sounds underneath the harmony of judgment. If the world is as happy as Ps 48 makes out, how is it that injustice is there in the first place, that the wicked and their angelic protectors have been able to make way, that the foundations have been shaken? This issues swells to dominate the following psalm (Ps 94). Together the psalms for Tuesday and Wednesday depict another reality, one in which the seekers of Yahweh are powerless and suffer oppression and exploitation. This reveals another attribute of Yahweh, that of inaction.

The development in the psalms is not quite this stark. Psalm 94 does attribute some action to Yahweh, at least in the experience of the speaking voice. But what is one person's experience of salvation beside the depiction of extreme violence towards the many? The net effect of the psalm is the ascription of inactivity to Yahweh.

Why is Yahweh inactive? For modern theology, the story raises the question of theodicy. The same conclusion ought not be drawn too hastily for the ancient audience. As Jon D. Levenson has argued, writings that portray Yahweh both as the powerful upholder of justice and as one who appears absent, or at least inactive, in a current crisis, may well be intended by the faithful worshippers as goads to shame or encourage Yahweh to action. No thought that Yahweh is somehow unable to intervene or inadequate to the task need be intended.[159] In a similar vein, Batto has drawn attention to a common ANE motif in which the most powerful deity rests after some great action that stabilized the universe and must be roused from sleep by the faithful when a disorganizing force appears.[160] The characteristic of inaction is amenable to various interpretations.

In the case of the Tamid Psalms, another explanation is given in the following psalm. There in Ps 81, as if in self-defense, Yahweh asserts that Israel's worship has been deficient. The people have not been obedient, but have followed their own notions, and these have

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[159] Jon D. Levenson, *Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence* (2d ed.; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), esp. the Preface (1994).

[160] Bernard F. Batto, "The Sleeping God: An Ancient Near Eastern Motif of Divine Sovereignty," *Bib* 68 (1987): 153–77; anticipated somewhat by Niels-Erik A. Andreasen, "The Old Testament Sabbath: A Tradition-Historical Investigation" (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1971), 174–82.

led them into a situation of persecution. Obedience to Yahweh would result in the removal of oppression. Thus Yahweh's reliability is not denied but qualified. Peace is not an automatic benefit that comes from merely being in the presence of Yahweh as Ps 48 might imply, but is conditional on behavior. By the time the Sabbath psalm is reached, the faithfulness of Yahweh, conditional though it be, is portrayed as triumphant. The reliability of Yahweh in Ps 93 and 92 is reinforced by the motif of permanence applied to things associated with the divine.

As one reads through the Tamid Psalms, there is a progressive development of the character, or nature, of Yahweh from assumed automatic reliability through a period of deconstruction and disorientation to a new view of faithfulness restored through reciprocal relationship.

For the righteous, faithfulness is a question of worship of Yahweh and personal morality. In the first psalm these two criteria are mixed. A seeker of Yahweh must be devoted to God alone and maintain a high morality (Ps 24:4). Such a stance seems to be rewarded in Ps 48, when the seekers come into God's presence in Zion. Psalm 82 further stresses the demand for just behavior. In Ps 94, the speaking voice castigates the wicked not merely for their lack of devotion to God, but mostly for their oppression of the righteous. Thus, by the fourth psalm in the sequence, the impression is that the primary characteristic for the righteous would be moral behavior. It is implied up to this point and explicitly stated in Ps 24 that the speaker and the seekers have exhibited this.

This characterization unravels in Ps 81, where it is revealed by the authoritative voice of Yahweh that the righteous are, in reality, not all that righteous. They have failed to worship Yahweh as commanded. Their proclamation of piety in the previous psalms does not match the world of Ps 81. Another deconstructive tension is set up.

This tension is resolved by a focus only on praise and worship. Psalm 93 is concerned entirely with praise of Yahweh presented by non-human agents. Psalm 92 also stresses praise, now from humans. It is the criterion with which the psalm opens and closes. The psalm makes no claims about the moral attributes of the righteous, but only describes their joy and praise. Thus, at the close of the Tamid Psalms, human faithfulness is revealed to be primarily a question of worship of Yahweh and secondarily of personal morality.

The Tamid Psalms contain other agents in addition to the two protagonists, Yahweh and the righteous. These others, however, undergo little or no change in characterization over the course of the narrative. The wicked, for example, remain bad from start to finish, although their circumstances change from haughty superiority to abject annihilation.

In the examination of agents, motifs and theme, the importance of Zion as the earthly and heavenly city and the location of Yahweh was stressed. Its significance does not abate when the Tamid Psalms are read as a narrative. Zion is the setting for the story of the psalms. Unlike the protagonists, Yahweh and the righteous, Zion undergoes no change in the course of the narrative. It remains the place of encounter with God throughout.

The plot of the narrative of the Tamid Psalms fits neatly with the structural characteristics of the collection. Three major structural features were noted in an earlier section: the primary characteristic is the sequential relationship between the psalms, while balanced secondary characteristics are formed by a disjunction between the six weekday psalms and the Sabbath psalm, and the parallels between Ps 94 at the center of the week and Ps 92 on the Sabbath. Links between consecutive psalms provide overlaps that connect the frames of the narrative together. The disjunction between the weekday psalms and the Sabbath psalm in the narrative becomes the separation between the final scene of the outcome of the narrative and its development from the beginning through complications to its (mysterious) resolution. The symmetry (or antisymmetry) between Ps 92 and 94 is embodied in the contrast between the resolution and the point where the crisis becomes manifest.

The pattern of orientation – disorientation – new orientation pervades the plot and characterizations. On Sunday and Monday in Ps 24 and 48, Yahweh is a source of security and the faithful righteous ones come proclaiming their high standards. On Tuesday and Wednesday the insecurity of society is recognized in the singing of Ps 82 and 94, and disorientation follows. By Thursday, the sham of the righteous is exposed (Ps 81). On Friday a reorientation takes place; a reshaped faith in the power of Yahweh is declared (Ps 93). The strands culminate on the Sabbath (Ps 92) with praise of the reoriented believer and the restoration of a righteous order in the world by Yahweh.

The theme of the Tamid Psalms, it was argued earlier, is the encounter with Yahweh that takes place in Zion/Jerusalem and that offers requital (judgment) for human needs and past behavior. That statement was derived from a static analysis of the structure and contents of the collection. This present section has shown how the theme finds dynamic realization in the narrative of the Tamid Psalms as this relates the encounter with Yahweh that takes place in Zion and of the changes in circumstance and orientation which result from this encounter, primarily for the situation of the believer, someone seeking Yahweh. Whether framed as theme or plot, what is described here is the meeting place of the structural, semantic and narrative elements of the Tamid Psalms. It provides an internal organizational principle for the collection and the complexity of its execution justifies admiration for the skilful art of the author(s) of the composition called the Tamid Psalms.

CHAPTER FIVE

APPLICATIONS: THREE CONTEXTS FOR THE TAMID PSALMS

The Tamid Psalms are a product of late Second Temple Judaism and intersect that complex phenomenon in various ways. The different planes of intersection define different contexts in which the Tamid Psalms belong. Study of the Tamid Psalms in relation to these contexts can provide insight not only into the psalms, but also into late Second Temple Judaism. In this chapter, three such contexts will be considered. The Tamid Psalms were collected for the Tamid service, so it is natural to examine them in relation to their ritual context. They are a subgroup of psalms from the canonical Psalter, and so they may be profitably compared with other subgroups with regard to literary features. They are also a liturgical collection, and several liturgical collections have come to light among the Dead Sea Scrolls, so this gives another context for a comparative study.

The three studies in this chapter are deliberately limited. Space does not permit an exhaustive treatment of each context. Thus, for example, only one liturgical text from the Dead Sea Scrolls is considered in detail. Nor do the three contexts exhaust the possible range of ways in which the Tamid Psalms might be exploited. For instance, theological elements of the Tamid Psalms are not treated here, although some of these were touched on at certain points in chapter 4.[1] As the Tamid Psalms were part of the worship practice of the Jerusalem Temple, a more thorough study of their theology is warranted, along with comparisons with beliefs found in other texts of the period.

[1] In the Christian tradition, reciprocity between theology and liturgy has long been formalized in the principle of *lex credendi lex orandi*, the rule of faith equals the rule of prayer. If applied to the Tamid Psalms, this principle would enable elements of a theology to be extracted from them. The motifs of this theology were outlined in ch. 4. The difficult question is "Whose theology?" The Temple intersects many interests – official religion, popular religion, levitical beliefs and others – so the Tamid Psalms may interact with any of these. In addition, the Tamid Psalms may not contain all the theology of this group. In contrast, Eileen Schuller has

1. *Ritual Context*

The Tamid Psalms occupy a rare, even unique, place in the corpus of biblical literature. It is a well accepted fact that psalms of all types were used in worship in the biblical period and later. Yet, despite plenty of evidence for this, remarkably little information is preserved about performance of the worship services themselves and the role of the psalms in them. This shortage has led to various theories, such as those concerning an Enthronement Festival, the ritual setting for the Psalms of Ascents (Ps 120–134) or the use of the psalms in private worship. By comparison, the ritual context of the Tamid Psalms is richly described with the Mishnaic materials providing information on the morning worship and corroborating earlier intertestamental literature (see ch. 2).

Up to this point, the Tamid Psalms have been treated primarily as a literary entity with only minor consideration given to their place in the Temple worship. This is somewhat one-sided. It was the Tamid service itself that prompted the creation of this collection and justified its preservation. Further, the study of ritual recognizes a close and weighty interrelationship between the actions, context and words of a performance. The ritual context may supply insight into interpretation of the psalms, just as the psalms have the potential to increase understanding of Temple worship. In this section attention is given to the Tamid Psalms as a component of the Tamid ritual performed daily in the Temple, and the implications of this context is explored. Sung on the steps of the Temple at the conclusion of the sacrifice, the Tamid psalms are in a sense the verbal component of the Tamid sacrifice and the transition to the daily public ritual activities in the Temple.

1.1 *Theoretical Considerations*

The combined information on the Tamid Psalms and Tamid ritual offers an opportunity to explore the intersection of performance and

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recently applied the principle of *lex credendi lex orandi* to liturgical material from (the more narrowly defined) community of Qumran with reference to a specific theological issue, namely the interplay between a strongly deterministic theology and intercessory prayer. See Schuller, "Petitionary Prayer and the Religion of Qumran" in *Religion in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. John J. Collins and Robert A. Kugler; SDSSRL; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000), 29–45.

historical studies. Unfortunately, it also encounters the combined methodological difficulties of both fields.

Delineation of the ritual context poses the first problem. A ritual is a complex process with many stages. What constitutes the ritual context of the Tamid Psalms? In the Mishnah, the Tamid Psalms are embedded at the close of a ritual complex that began before dawn. One might, however, take a broader perspective and see the Tamid services as part of the total daily ritual of the Temple, with the morning and afternoon services forming the boundary markers for the day's activities, or expand further and consider links to other festivals. Where should one stop?[2]

While the information on the Tamid ritual is *comparatively* plentiful, it is limited to what has been preserved in historical documents and so falls short of what might be expected by the social scientist. As was noted in chapter 2, the account in the Mishnah is not complete. For example, the Mishnah records that there were trumpet blasts during the singing of the psalm, but not their timing. It is conceivable that the blasts divided the psalms in a way that emphasized certain features of them, yet this information is lost and so cannot be taken into account in an analysis. Not only are the records incomplete, but they may also be unreliable at points and this may lead to false conclusions.[3] Thus there are elements in the larger ritual context of the Tamid Psalms that are either unknown or misinterpreted. These may warp interpretation in unpredictable ways.

A third hazard arises in the specification of the goal of the quest. It is not possible to recover the perspective of an onlooker or performer of the Tamid service.[4] Achieving such a perspective is quite

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[2] When discussing the context of a ritual, Charles L. Briggs points out the twin dangers of inclusiveness, that is, including so much material in the context that analysis becomes unwieldy, and a false objectivity, which assumes that the observer's decisions as to context are correct; see Briggs, *Competence in Performance: The Creativity of Tradition in Mexicano Verbal Art* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 12–15. On sacrifice as a process imbedded in a larger ritual, see Victor Turner, "Sacrifice as Quintessential Process: Prophylaxis or Abandonment?" *HR* 16 (1977–78): 189–215.

[3] See ch. 2.1, esp. 2.1.4.

[4] Terminology presents a problem here. The service was performed by religious officials and the onlookers had little to do with it. Thus it is not strictly accurate to call all those present participants. At the same time it would also be wrong to class the onlookers as disinterested observers (see below). The majority of those around the Temple would affiliate themselves with the Temple and its religious traditions.

problematic in the study of live contemporary performances. In historical studies the difficulties are more severe. There are no participants available for interview. The only records are literary and incomplete. Furthermore, it is unlikely that understanding of the service was uniform among all participants, or that its interpretation would have remained constant over the 200 or so years in which the Tamid Psalms were sung.[5] Conclusions about the interaction between the psalms and the ritual are made on the basis of the imposition of models derived from modern studies that may not be appropriate for the ancient data.

These cautionary remarks do not invalidate an attempt to link psalms with ritual, but do underline the need for circumspection. The conclusions drawn in this section are preliminary. They will range from phenomenological observations to speculative interpretive comments, and should be regarded as the results of an initial exploration, hopefully encouraging further work. The speculative aspect of the investigation can be moderated, and illuminated, by recourse to comparative material from other cultures. In this discussion of the Tamid Psalms, comparisons will be made with Hindu folk traditions and Mexicano verbal art.[6]

In a religious ritual, sacred reality intersects the present reality of the participants. The utterances in the ritual (its liturgy) redescribe mundane objects and actions in a way that transforms them into the world of the sacred. This process can be viewed in two ways. On one hand, the words are creative of the sacred reality. They produce a new configuration for understanding a world into which the participant may enter. On the other hand, the underlying ritual operates on the assumption that the world as described already exists. The liturgy functions to make this reality more present in the consciousness of the participants.

Despite appearances, these two perspectives are not mutually exclusive. Both occur at the same time in the ritual. The participants

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[5] Changes in understanding and performance may occur over fairly short time periods under the impact of cultural shifts; see, e.g., the comments on shifts in Middle Indian performances in Joyce Burkhalter Flueckiger, *Gender and Genre in the Folklore of Middle India* (Myth and Poetics; Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 25, 75, 103. The period in which the Tamid Psalms were in use would have seen several major shifts in power and influence – Hasmonean, Roman and Herodian. Variations in understanding of the Tamid sacrifice in near contemporary sources were noted in ch. 2.2, 2.3.2, and 2.6.

[6] See Flueckiger, *Gender and Genre,* and Briggs, *Competence.*

come to the ritual with a predisposition to understand the world and the ritual in a particular way that corresponds, if imperfectly, with the configuration of the sacred reality. The ritual (ideally) latches on to that partial understanding, refines it and reinforces it so that it becomes more realized for the participant. "Ritual utterances both affirm the existence of a particular situation and create that situation by their very utterance."[7]

1.2 *The Tamid Psalms and the Cult*

The Tamid service was performed twice each day, in the morning and the afternoon, for almost all of the period of the Second Temple, in this way framing the routine public sacrificial activities of the day in the Temple.

The most information has been preserved about the morning service. This centered around the slaughter and sacrifice of a lamb as an *ʿolah*. Prior to the slaughter, various preparatory activities took

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[7] Wade Wheelock, "A Taxonomy of the Mantras in the New- and Full-Moon Sacrifice," *HR* 19 (1979–80): 353. Recognition of the dual nature of ritual is commonplace, but its theoretical basis and power over the individual are variously understood. Wheelock refers to the speech act theory of J. L. Austin. Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, in their exposition of the sociology of knowledge, describe a dialectic process of externalization and internalization through which the social reality is at the same time both objectivated by an individual and imprinted on the individual. In hermeneutics, the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer initiated consideration of a process of fusion of the horizons of the worlds of the text and the interpreter. Paul Ricoeur's theory (see ch. 4.5.2) allows for the exercise of some volition on the part of the interpreter as to the extent to which they are influenced by the world of the text. Likewise, Jonathan Z. Smith lays weight on the analytical processes of the participant in a ritual when he argues that the power of ritual lies in the conscious perception of incongruities between everyday experience and the world posited by the ritual. A third, transformative, function of ritual is often made explicit. This may result in a change within the person, as Harry P. Nasuti notes in his recent study of the psalms as literary texts centering on individual devotional use and taking into account such uses in the history of interpretation. Tom F. Driver calls attention to ritual as a means of social change. See Berger and Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), e.g., 129; also Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 3–51; Driver, *The Magic of Ritual: Our Need for Liberating Rites that Transform Our Lives and Our Communities* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 132–91; Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (2d rev. ed.; trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall; 1989; repr., New York: Continuum, 1994), e.g., 302–7; Nasuti, *Defining Sacred Songs: Genre, Tradition and the Post-Critical Interpretation of the Psalms* (JSOTSup 218; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 82–127, esp. 124; Smith, *To Take Place: Toward a Theory in Ritual* (CSJH; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 103–7.

place – duties were assigned, the altar and other areas in the Temple cleaned and prepared, the lamb selected and so forth. Around dawn, the slaughter of the lamb, its dismemberment and the offering of its blood took place, coordinated with the opening of the doors to the Temple. A short break intervened between slaughter and sacrifice, while the participating priests worshipped in private in a chamber in the Temple. After this, some other daily rituals were carried out inside the Temple, such as trimming the lamps and restocking the incense. The lamb was then offered on the altar of burnt offerings, which stood just outside the Temple proper in a court out-of-bounds to the lay worshippers but in public view. A grain offering and a wine offering were also made. As the wine was being poured out, the choir of Levites, who were standing on the steps between the lay area of the Temple and the altar area, began singing, accompanied by bursts of trumpets.

Although only priests and Levites were actively involved in the service and the accompanying rituals, lay people were also present. It was a requirement that there be a group of lay Israelites in attendance (the *Maʿamad*) who traveled to Jerusalem along with the rostered courses of priests and Levites. Most likely there would be others present in the Temple at the time of the service – pilgrims, supplicants come to offer sacrifice later in the day and other visitors. Although they did nothing but stand and watch, such people might still be classed as participants. Since it was believed that the service was performed for all Israel, any Jew present for a religious reason would likely have felt they were participating in some way and feel the influence of the service and the psalms.

Awareness of the Tamid service was widespread throughout Jewish communities in Judea and the Diaspora. Those who had attended the service (the *Maʿamad* and others) would bring back information about it to their communities.[8] More than this, recollection of the Tamid service also formed a link between the Temple in Jerusalem and the cities and villages of Judah and beyond. Those priests, Levites and lay Israelites who did not make the trip to Jerusalem at their rostered time of service instead met twice daily in the village for most of the week of their semi-annual duty. Their gathering together

[8] On the importance of the *Maʿamad* in disseminating and preserving the Temple traditions, see Alfred Sendry, *Music in Ancient Israel* (London: Vision, 1969), 184–87.

would have been a reminder of the Temple service, not only for them, but also for others around them, who observed the change in routine at the time for Temple service. Indeed, since there would always have been some neighbor whose usual daily routine would have been broken by the requirement to serve in the Temple, a reminder of the Tamid, and as a consequence of the worship in the Temple in Jerusalem, would have always been present in a Jewish community.[9]

The bulk of the daily morning ritual appears to be constant from day to day, at least this is the impression given by the account in the Mishnah. Some slight variations arise from the seasonal requirements of certain festivals or the participation of the High Priest. Apart from these, the only factor that changes is the psalm, with a different psalm sung each day. The episodic character of the performance of the Tamid Psalms interacts with the daily ritual.[10] On one hand, the sequence of psalms superimposes on the constancy of the daily ritual a teleology that orients the ritual to the final day of the cycle, the Sabbath. Under their influence, the period of repetition is weekly, not daily, that is, the Tamid Psalms convert what might otherwise be conceived of as seven independent daily rituals into a complex ritual performed over the course of a week and comprised of seven similar sub-components.[11] Thus with regard to the Tamid Psalms, it is more accurate to speak of the weekly process of ritual in the Temple rather than the daily ritual.[12]

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[9] Not all who came to the Temple for worship or sacrifice on any particular day would be present at the morning or afternoon Tamid for the performance of the psalms. However, since the ritual formed part of the cultural background of Judaism, it is likely that a worshipper in the Temple would have felt the influence of the psalms whether or not that person was present for their performance at the Tamid service.

[10] Episodic presentations are not unparalleled, see Flueckiger, *Gender and Genre*, 133–34, 163.

[11] Jan Bergman has found depictions in several cultures of ritual processes formed from repeated similar components that combine past, present and future actions into an extended whole; see Bergman, "Religio-Phenomenological Reflections on the Multi-Level Process of Giving to the Gods," in *Gifts to the Gods: Proceedings of the Uppsala Symposium 1985* (ed. Tullia Linders and Gullog Nordquist; BOREAS 15; Uppsala: University of Uppsala, 1987), 31–42.

[12] The psalms also lay some ground for their repetition, in that the depiction of the happy state of the righteous in the Sabbath Psalm could provide incentive for someone to travel to the Temple in search of reward, as in Ps 24. Flueckiger notes that the *sua nac* ritual contains a seed for its repetition at its close (*Gender and Genre*, 99).

On the other hand, the constancy of the daily Tamid service bonds the psalms together at a ritual level. The fixed, regularly repeated ritual would tend to collapse the time axis for the participants, so that all parts of the ritual would become, in some sense, accessible to consciousness at all times. Any psalm, or any motif in a psalm, might be present to the worshipper at any time inspired by the performance of some other psalm or part of the ritual. For a participant, the content of the psalms would run together and the narrative quality would be minimized.[13]

The account of the Tamid service in the Mishnah concentrates on the activities of the ritual and records little of its verbal accompaniment. Only a few stock responses, some fixed prayers or blessings, and the seven psalms are remembered from the liturgy of the worship. The psalms form the largest component of the liturgy and they are the most complex from a literary point of view. Coming at the close of the morning service, after the blessing and completion of the offering, they occupy a place of transition between the Tamid service and the other rituals of the day. How do they participate in the world-creating and world-maintaining role of the cult? To answer this, one first must seek those aspects of the psalms that tie in with their ritual context.

Charles Briggs, in his analysis of contemporary Mexicano verbal art, has considered how a performance intersects its context. He provided a threefold categorization of the way in which the "contextual features" of an utterance bind with the present context. Briggs formulated his classification with reference to a creative performance of traditional material in a conversational context in which there may be interaction between the performer and audience. The Tamid ritual does not fit this situation. Nevertheless, the three categories he has discerned motivate a corresponding system of classification for the ritual context that follows a similar logic in dividing the way in which the performance of a text references its context. A contextual feature of a ritual utterance may bind with its context through: (a) some element of the "social, linguistic, and physical setting of the performance" of the ritual text; or (b) some "specific interaction" or action in temporal proximity to the performance; or (c) some reference

[13] Briggs notes that the performance of a standardized text allows the worshipper to meditate on any event related to the ritual (*Competence*, 331).

to "the general social, cultural, or political-economic conditions that characterize the present" at the time of the performance.[14] These three categories are used here to analyze the interaction of the Tamid Psalms with their context in the rituals of Temple worship

Several elements in the psalms index the linguistic, physical and social setting of the ritual. A linguistic link is provided by the word עלה, to go up. It was seen in chapter 4 that this root, and more generally the concept of upward movement, occurs frequently in the Tamid Psalms. It also is the root for the name of the major sacrifice at the Tamid service, the *ʿolah* or burnt offering. Further, the trip to Jerusalem and the Temple was idiomatically expressed as "going up." This would provide a point of contact between the people in the Temple at the time of the Tamid service and Ps 24:3.

Other linguistic links occur in the calls to worship found in Ps 81 and 92. What is being encouraged there, particularly in regard to singing, is being enacted during the course of the Tamid service and in the performance of the psalms. In recalling commands to sing in praise of Yahweh, the Tamid Psalms contain a partial warrant within themselves for their performance.

The most significant link between the psalms and their context at this first level lies with the physical setting of the service. In previous chapters, the repeated occurrence of the "agent" Zion (a term used here to embrace the city of Jerusalem, the Temple and their heavenly counterparts) in the Tamid Psalms has been stressed. For the Tamid service, Zion is the location in which the psalms and the ritual are performed. The facets of Zion referenced in the psalms connect with the reality experienced by the audience. The participants and observers are standing in the Temple precincts (cf. Ps 48, 82, 92). They have ascended the holy hill. For them the gates of Ps 24 may well be the ones they passed through to enter the city or the Temple precincts, or perhaps the doors whose noisy opening marked the moment of sacrifice (*m. Tamid* 3:8). They can look around and see the architectural features of the city (Ps 48). The Temple before them, later gilded by Herod, shines in the morning sun like a heavenly palace reflecting the glory of Yahweh (Ps 24, 93).

[14] Briggs, *Competence*, 20–21. Briggs also considers religious texts used in Holy Week rituals and notes differences between this particular context and conversational ones he treated earlier (see esp. 331–39).

The context of the Temple rituals adds another implication to the emphasis in the Tamid Psalms on the location Zion. The setting of the psalms indexes the geographical reality in which the observer is located. At the same time, it redescribes the mundane reality in a super-mundane way, locating it in the supernatural world posited by the texts. Through references to the physical setting, the psalms reinforce the religious atmosphere surrounding the service and provide an entry point for the onlookers into the spiritual reality of the Temple rituals. The converse process also applies. The worshippers would have been predisposed to expect a heightened spiritual experience in the Jerusalem Temple, as the primary "sacred space" in Judaism. The physical reality of the Temple and the religious conceptions associated with it echo in the psalms and open a way for the participant to enter the story of the psalms. Ritual text and context interact, ideally setting up a feed-back loop that heightens the experience of those present.

A final tie is found in the description of human beings in the Tamid Psalms. The majority of those around the Temple precincts would fall under the rubric of those who had come in obedience to worship Yahweh (cf. Ps 24, 48, 81, 92). Among the participating and observing priests and Levites there would be a large number who were in Jerusalem from outlying areas in order to perform their rotation of service in the Temple. The lay members in the *Maʿamad* would also be there to fulfill a religious duty. Others observing the service may have come to offer sacrifice later in the day or take part in some other ritual. Almost all would regard themselves as members of Israel, the people of God.[15] Thus it is most likely that the vast majority of those present in the Temple would be predisposed to self-identify with the class of the "righteous" in the Tamid Psalms. This creates a point of contact between the social location of those around the ritual and the fictive world of the text of the Tamid Psalms.

The second category relates to interactions close at the time of the performance.[16] The Tamid Psalms closed the morning Tamid

[15] Psalm 24 could include proselytes in its ambit. There may have been a few curious tourists or foreign military observers present as well.

[16] Briggs formulated this second category in terms of interactions preceding the performance. This restriction is overly narrow for ritual texts, since the larger ritual context is likely to be well-known to participants. A reference in the liturgy that

service, the first ritual of the day, and so little had transpired beforehand with which they might interact. Nevertheless some points of contact can be discerned. The core of the Tamid service, the *ʿolah* sacrifice and the other offerings of incense, wine and bread, were prescribed by the Torah. Their performance was an act of obedience to the Torah. The Tamid Psalms make reference to the requirement to follow God's commands (esp. Ps 81). So the psalms obliquely recall the reasons for the Tamid service and attest to the devotion of God's people in performing the service. This point might likely have been felt strongly by the priests charged with performing the worship.

After the morning Tamid ritual, the rest of the day in the Temple was primarily devoted to public and private sacrifices. In what ways do the psalms provide an interpretive frame for the rest of the day's activities? For the priests and levites performing these sacrifices, the Tamid Psalms would have articulated again the sense that their actions were in accord with the Torah and that they were demonstrating righteous and obedient behavior in praise and service of Yahweh. The psalms provided a reminder of the warrant for their activities. As for those bringing the sacrifices, they also would have been acting in accord with the Torah and so, in the world of the Tamid Psalms, declaring their righteousness and devotion. Other factors also come into play for this group. The bringing of a sacrifice can be seen as a request to interact with God. A recurrent and prominent motif in the Tamid Psalms is that of encounter with God. At this point the psalms latch onto the life of the faithful. Further, the psalms contact the reasons for sacrifice. The basic motivation for sacrifice can be split into two: either gratitude or repentance – a desire to celebrate life received from the deity or to protect against the harmful effects of inappropriate behavior.[17] In the Tamid Psalms, these aspects are manifested in elements of praise (Ps 48, 94, 93, 92) and admonition (Ps 81).

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anticipates some coming ritual event would be apprehended as such by a participant and could trigger reflection, conscious or unconscious, on what is to come.

[17] Bruce J. Malina, "Mediterranean Sacrifice: Dimensions of Domestic and Political Religion," *BTB* 26 (1996): 36. In the late Second Temple period, the atoning role of sacrifice as an outward display of repentance was prominent; see E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief, 63 B.C.E.–6.6 C.E.* (London: SCM, 1992), 252–53; Robert J. Daly, "The Power of Sacrifice in Ancient Judaism and Christianity," *JRitSt* 4 (1990): 182. The Tamid Psalms, in contrast, give more space to praise of God than

What the Tamid Psalms say about the encounter with Yahweh at Zion becomes a promise for those participating in the rituals. The encounter, according to the psalms, is certain and will issue in some benefit for the righteous (but not for the wicked). Thus those offering sacrifice are reassured by the psalms that if they act in faith, their sacrifice will be effective.

The influence of the Tamid Psalms has the potential to extend beyond this. They affirm various behavioral norms followed by the righteous – trust, devotion to God, worship and justice. Once a person at the Temple has identified with this group in the psalms, even if partially, these norms contribute to a model for behavior sweetened by the promise of reward. Thus the psalms also encourage a change in attitude and behavior among those present in the Temple.[18] Just as ritual both creates and reflects a sacred reality, so the Tamid Psalms reflect and create the attitude of those present. They offer both reassurance and challenge: they assure those present of their righteousness and at the same time challenge them to be righteous; they confirm the validity of the actions of the priests and levites, and at the same time call on them to act obediently to the Torah; and they declare the effectiveness of the sacrifices that follow, at the same time as they encourage the worshippers to declare their devotion with sacrifices.

The third category concerns ritual in the context of the wider society. The Tamid Psalms index the popular perception of the general conditions of the late Second Temple period primarily through the motif of threat, hostility and unjust treatment of God's people. The psalms are somewhat non-specific on these points. They aver to the existence of injustice and promise its demise along with the oppressors, but they do not name countries or rulers. They could thus latch on to a general sentiment that all is not right with the world without causing offence to non-Jews. For someone in Judea, their import might be stronger. For most of the late Second Temple period, the people of Judea had limited control over their political

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to words questioning the behavior of the righteous (as distinct from condemning the behavior of the wicked, who will perish anyway) and lack expressions of confession or contrition on the part of the participants. In this respect, they differ from the prayers of 4QDibHam studied in section 3 below.

[18] Yehudah A. Liebreich emphasized this formative role; see Liebreich, "The Psalms of the Levites for the Days of the Week (in Hebrew)," *ErIsr* 3 (1954): 173.

or social circumstances. Large foreign powers were always present, jostling Judea one way or another on the international scene. The extent of domestic self-government varied and restrictions were almost always present. Jewish culture, like so many others, experienced the challenge of change born by Hellenism. Comments in the Tamid Psalms on the oppression of God's people and the vision of its removal would link with ethnic hopes for independence and justice felt by many.

In summary, analysis under the three categories shows that the Tamid Psalms could touch the expectations of those who came to worship in the Temple at several points. Their setting is the Temple, the place where the worshipper stands, and so they contribute to the process by which an earthly place becomes charged with religious meaning. They talk of certain encounter with God, something the worshipper seeks. They promise benefits for the faithful who obey the Torah and devote themselves to Yahweh and so assure the worshipper that their offering (whether it be one of praise or of atonement) is acceptable to Yahweh and will achieve its aims. Certainly the worshippers should know or believe these things when they come. However, the Tamid Psalms recall or reinforce these beliefs at the start of the day's activities.[19] The text of the Tamid Psalms links in with the situation and expectations of those in the Temple.

The connections are indirect. They do not take the form of blatant dogmatic statements but are embedded in a story of encounter, repentance, restitution and praise, played out in seven episodes. The psalms do not refer directly or indirectly to the Tamid service at which they are performed, nor do they mention sacrifice. Such an oblique or indirect connection between text and ritual is not unprecedented. Joyce Burkhalter Flueckiger has described an experience in her study of Middle Indian folklore and ritual when in response to a request for an explanation of a certain festival she was given a narrative which did not mention the festival or its patron goddesses.[20] The connections, she found, lay at a deeper level, in the transformations in behavior and attitude expressed in the festival and narrative.

This discussion of the Tamid Psalms in the cult is far from comprehensive. Other aspects could be investigated. Comparisons across

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[19] Similarly, their performance at the closing service of the day would reiterate these sentiments after the activities of the day.

[20] Flueckiger, *Gender and Genre*, 50–76, esp. 50–51; also, Briggs, *Competence*, 331.

the cultic year in the Temple provide another area for investigation. According to *b. Sukkah* 55a, several of the Tamid Psalms were also used on the days of the festival of Tabernacles.[21] These psalms form a connection between the annual celebration of Tabernacles and the daily worship. Concepts, motifs and emotions from the festival of Tabernacles may thus be imported into the daily worship service. What might these be? How do they modify, conflict or augment the discussion of the Tamid Psalms in their ritual context? Comparisons with other cultures are also possible. Limitations of scope were the only reason that the present study restricted itself to Hindu and Mexicano traditions. It may well be that the study of rituals in other cultures may yield insights in addition to what is given here.

2. *Groups of Psalms and the Canonical Psalter*

The MT Psalter contains many subgroups of psalms, several of which have some properties similar to those of the Tamid Psalms. The outcomes of the earlier detailed investigation of the Tamid Psalms can be of benefit in the study of these other groups. In this section, this use of the Tamid Psalms will be illustrated in the case of two other groups. These two will be brought into a comparative relationship with the Tamid Psalms, with the aim of critiquing and enriching the study of those other groups. For reasons of space, the discussion will be kept brief.

The two groups of psalms from the Psalter that will be considered are the Psalms of Ascents (Ps 120–134) and the first part of the fourth book of the Psalter (Ps 90–100, which includes the "Kingship of Yahweh" psalms). The first group is defined by its superscriptions, much like the Tamid Psalms. The second collection is not so explicitly defined, but nevertheless it, or subgroups of it, have attracted scholarly attention in recent times. In part it is chosen here since it has some psalms in common with the Tamid Psalms. In addition, the comparison of this group with the Tamid Psalms leads quickly to the question of the "canonization" of the Psalter. The contribu-

[21] On day 3, Ps 94:16(–23); day 4, Ps 94:8(–15); day 5, Ps 81, and on day 6, Ps 82. If the Sabbath fell on one of the days of celebration, the Sabbath psalm, Ps 92, was sung on that day, the sequence shifted back one day, and Ps 82 was omitted.

tion of a study of the Tamid Psalms to this larger topic will also be discussed.

2.1 *The Songs of Ascents (Ps 120–134)*

Psalms 120–134 each bear in their superscriptions the designation "a song of ascents" (שיר ה/למעלות) and are the only psalms in the Psalter identified in this way. They occur together as a block of consecutive psalms separated from their neighbors by certain devices for marking boundaries in the Psalter (Ps 119, 134).[22] These facts warrant the study of Ps 120–134 as an independent group of psalms – indeed internal evidence in the Psalter defining this group is stronger than for the Tamid Psalms. The same sort of questions pursued for the Tamid Psalms may also be raised for the Songs of Ascents: questions of common vocabulary or compositional style, thematic unity, literary unity, ritual context and so on. Several studies of the Songs of Ascents along these lines have been published.[23] Among other things, these studies have reinforced the validity of treating these psalms as a group by highlighting several shared linguistic and compositional features.[24] Common motifs, in particular a recurring interest in Jerusalem, have also been exposed.

Reasons for the grouping and organization of the Songs of Ascents, however, have proven more elusive. To put efforts to this end in perspective, it is worthwhile to recall three advantages exploited in the study of the Tamid Psalms: (a) the context for use of the collection was clearly defined as the daily worship service in the Temple,

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[22] The long wisdom psalm, Ps 119, is quite unlike what follows and marks the close of the preceding section, while the final Song of Ascent is a benediction, a standard indicator for the end of a block of psalms. For details, see Daniel Grossberg, *Centripetal and Centrifugal Structures in Biblical Poetry* (SBLMS 39; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 19–20.

[23] Four studies are Loren D. Crow, *The Songs of Ascent (Psalms 120–134): Their Place in Israelite History and Religion* (SBLDS 148; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996); Daniel Grossberg, *Centripetal and Centrifugal Structures in Biblical Poetry* (SBLMS 39; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989); Cuthbert C. Keet, *A Study of the Psalms of Ascent: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary upon Psalms cxx–cxxxiv* (London: Mitre Press, 1969); and Klaus Seybold, *Die Wallfahrtspsalmen: Studien zur Entstehungsgeschichte von Psalm 120–134* (BTS 3; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978).

[24] Shared features include distinctive vocabulary or spellings, unusual grammatical constructions and a predilection for particles. See Grossberg, *Centripetal and Centrifugal Structures*, 48–50; Evode Beaucamp, "L'unité du Recueil des Montées: Psaumes 120–134," *LASBF* 29 (1979): 73–90; Hendrick Viviers, "The Coherence of the Ma'alot Psalms," *ZAW* 106 (1994): 275–89.

as specified in the superscriptions and the Mishnah; (b) consideration of literary matters revealed internal coherency in the group with regard to motifs, theme, plot and narrative development; and (c) these literary elements were able to be linked to the ritual context of the psalms.

The ritual context for the Songs of Ascents is obscure. Many suggestions have been advanced for it, but none has won the day.[25] The superscription is of little help as its external referent is opaque. For example, "ascent" may be taken to refer to steps in the Temple, a specific grammatical device or a pilgrimage up to Jerusalem along with other possibilities, and each of these alternatives may be developed in several ways. Study of literary aspects of the collection has not resulted in the discovery of a convincing theme, narrative structure or other *internal* organizing principle. Indeed, in most studies, the organizing principle for the collection is found in some external source. The most common explanation is based on a pilgrimage scenario, in which it is supposed that the psalms were sung by pilgrims on the way to Jerusalem.[26] The psalms are then placed in order in a narrative of the journey as songs sung at stations on the way – starting out, facing danger, entering the city, etc. This type of explanation is attractive in outline, but breaks down when developed in detail, as some psalms are a poor fit to the narrative frame. "A thoroughgoing convincing scheme is elusive."[27]

What light does the study of the Tamid Psalms shed on the Songs of Ascents? As noted, the Songs of Ascents are more clearly defined as a literary group in the Psalter than the Tamid Psalms. Consequently,

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[25] For a summary, see Grossberg, *Centripetal and Centrifugal Structures*, 16–19. Michael D. Goulder has proposed that the Psalms were used by Nehemiah at Tabernacles in 445; see "The Songs of Ascents and Nehemiah," *JSOT* 75 (1997): 43–58.

[26] For example, see Keet, *Psalms of Ascent*.

[27] For this objection to the pilgrimage scenario, see Grossberg, *Centripetal and Centrifugal Structures*, 52–55 (quote on 54). Grossberg favors the theory of Leon J. Liebreich, that the collection is based on Num 6:24–26; see Liebreich, "The Songs of Ascents and the Priestly Blessing," *JBL* 74 (1955): 33–36. The connections noted by Liebreich between the priestly blessing in Numbers and the psalms are impressive, but his case also requires demonstration of the unlikelihood that any other passage serves as a model for the Songs of Ascent. Crow (*Songs of Ascent*) sidesteps the question of narrative coherence by arguing that the psalms were designed to encourage a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, presented as the city from which prosperity flows, and were created in the Persian period from a nucleus of folk songs. The interest is thus more on the original socio-historical setting for the group and its redactional pre-history than on long term use and internal organizational coherence.

the success of the literary study of the Tamid Psalms as a self-contained composition in chapter 4 encourages further careful literary investigation of the Songs of Ascents as a group, with an eye to classifying motifs, moods, characters and narrative elements without reference to some external rationale.

The canonical order of the Tamid Psalms does not correspond to their liturgical order. This fact raises a caution over assuming that the Songs of Ascents have been preserved in the order in which they were performed. Unfortunately, this observation muddies the search for signs of a linear development of thought or emotion in the collection. If the narrative order is not the same as the canonical order, then a researcher seeking, for example, to place the psalms in a narrative frame of pilgrimage must also determine the order in which to read the Songs and justify this re-ordering. This adds another degree of speculation to the reconstruction of the frame.

Lack of certainty about the ritual context for the Songs of Ascents implies that one should be cautious about reconstructing their setting or external rationale. For the Tamid Psalms, it was observed that the narrative aspect (the plot) of the collection did not explain the ritual, nor even tie in closely with it. Links with the ritual context were provided by less comprehensive factors, such as motifs. This further complicates retrieval of a setting for the Songs of Ascents. Even if a satisfactory narrative frame for the Songs could be constructed, one which, for instance, related them to a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, that alone would not imply that the psalms were used on an real pilgrimage. The ritual links may lie elsewhere.

In sum, the contrast with the Tamid Psalms suggests that one should be hesitant to go outside the collection of the Songs of Ascents to try to locate their context, but should study them for the most part as a literary collection. Such a study may lead to a comparison of the literary elements (agents, motifs, theme, plot, and emotions) in the two groups. For example, Jerusalem takes a central role in both collections, as a place beloved of Yahweh where the visitor might gain some benefit. What more might be said about the characterization of Jerusalem in the two collections and the ways in which they agree or disagree?

2.2 *Psalms 90–100*

Unlike the Tamid Psalms and the Songs of Ascents, these eleven psalms are not identified as a group by their superscriptions or the

testimony of some ancient witness to a ritual function nor do they show signs of unity on form critical grounds, although several of them share a common assertion of the kingship of Yahweh (Ps 93, 95–99). However, in recent scholarship there have been several studies of these psalms in relation to each other, partitioned into one or two consecutive subgroups. The motivation for this has been provided by an interest in the structure of the Psalter and the rationale underlying the sequencing of the psalms. These eleven psalms, occurring at the start of Book Four, are identified as occupying a critical and central place in the Psalter.[28]

While there is general recognition that the psalms ought to be grouped, there is no agreement on the constitution of the groups. Wilson considered Ps 93–100 to be central; Reindl studied 90–92; Whybray argued for the association of 92–99; and Howard has in different places considered the groups Ps 93–100, 90–94 and 90–99.[29] The import of the disagreements should not be over-rated; they indicate the preliminary nature of studies of the organization of the Psalter, not hopeless confusion. They are due mostly to the anomalous nature of Ps 94, which is closer in thought to Ps 90 and 91 than Ps 93 and 95.

All of the studies note links between the psalms on the level of words and motifs. The dominating motif is usually seen as the kingship of Yahweh, which comes to the fore after Ps 94. A complementary motif concerning the distressed state of humanity is present in the earlier psalms. Wisdom elements are also noted.

Analysis of the structure of the eleven consecutive psalms has been carried out in detail by David Howard in the course of several papers. According to him, Ps 96–99 form a central core of praise

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[28] See, e.g., Gerald Henry Wilson, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (SBLDS 76; Chico, Ca.: Scholars Press, 1985), 214–15.

[29] David M. Howard, "A Contextual Reading of Psalms 90–94," in *The Shape and Shaping of the Psalter* (ed. J. Clinton McCann; JSOTSup 159; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 108–23; idem, *The Structure of Psalms 93–100* (BibJS 5; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1997); idem, "Psalm 94 among the Kingship-of-Yhwh Psalms," *CBQ* 61 (1999): 667–85; J. Reindl, "Weisheitliche Bearbeitung von Psalmen. Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis der Sammlung des Psalters," in *Congress Volume, Vienna 1980* (ed. J. A. Emerton; VTSup 32; Brill: Leiden, 1981), 350–54; R. Norman Whybray, *Reading the Psalms as a Book* (JSOTSup 222; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 77; Wilson, *Editing*. Whybray makes his argument as part of the exposition of a position he ultimately rejects. In his study of Ps 93–100, Howard notes that he prefers the division 90–94, 95–100 (166).

of Yahweh's kingship, framed by Ps 95 and 100. The sequence of praise is initiated by Ps 93. While Ps 94 breaks this sequence, he also finds "significant ties" (verbal and contrastive) between it and Ps 95 and 93. Book Three of the Psalter, he observes, closed on a depressed note concerning the distressed state of humanity and alienation from God. This motif is picked up in Ps 90–91, but gradually moves toward a resolution. Psalm 92 is a positive human answer to Ps 90, followed by full-throated praise of Yahweh's rule in Ps 93. Psalm 94 recalls the difficult situation of Ps 90 and the previous book, and in its present position forms a "hinge" between the preceding and following psalms.[30] The structure is thus like a musical composition in which two themes are dominant consecutively, but which contains prefigurations of the second theme and later recapitulations of the first.

The analysis of Ps 90–100 is similar in many ways to that of the Tamid Psalms. In both cases, common vocabulary and motifs tie the psalms together. Links between consecutive psalms may be discerned as well as connections between non-consecutive psalms, the latter being more pronounced in Ps 90–100 than in the Tamid Psalms. These links facilitate the determination of the structures of the respective collections of psalms. The structure of Ps 90–100 is the more complex of the two, reflecting the strength of ties between non-adjacent psalms and the puzzling position of Ps 94.

On the other hand, conclusions for Ps 90–100 and the Tamid Psalms diverge at some key points. Studies of Ps 90–100 have not identified any psychological progression embedded in the sequence

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[30] This summary is an amalgam of the three essays by Howard cited in n. 29. Of recent work on the structure of Ps 90–100, his is the most extensive and may be taken as representative for the purposes of the discussion here. For greater detail on the structure of Ps 90–92, see Reindl, "Weisheitliche Bearbeitung." On displaced psalms as hinges or transitions between segments of the Psalter, see Gerald H. Wilson, "Understanding the Purposeful Arrangement of Psalms in the Psalter: Pitfalls and Promise," in *The Shape and Shaping of the Psalter* (ed. J. Clinton McCann; JSOTSup 159; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 50. Whybray, on the other hand, proposes that Ps 92 and 94 exhibit a realism common to wisdom traditions and complement the "cultic euphoria" of Ps 93 and the others by providing a deliberate reminder of the current state of the worshippers; see Whybray, *Reading the Psalms*, 77. This reading strategy ignores the order of the psalms, so that Ps 92 "reinforces" the later Ps 94. A sequential reading would see expressions of hesitancy about God's power gradually breaking up and giving way to praise.

equivalent to that found in the Tamid Psalms, which follow the orientation-disorientation-new orientation pattern identified by Walter Brueggemann (see ch. 4.5.2). Further, whereas the Tamid Psalms exhibit key features of a narrative, including a plot and an overall theme, no such narrative development has been identified for the sequence Ps 90–100. In other words, Ps 90–100 (and their subgroups) lack clear indicators of a progression of thought. They form, if anything, a static collection. Development and progression are higher-level features of the Tamid Psalms, which also bind to the static structure of the group.

Thus the editorial shaping evidenced in the Tamid Psalms is more pervasive and more creative than in Ps 90–100. For the Tamid Psalms, it can be seen in links, static structure and dynamic progressions through the collection. In fact, it was the presence of psychological and narrative development that warranted the use of the term composition for the collection, rather than weaker references to editorial activity or shaping. The Tamid Psalms exhibit stronger organizational features than Ps 90–100 (or its subsequences).

One further and intriguing point of comparison between the two groups of psalms has yet to be considered. The Tamid Psalms and Ps 90–100 have three psalms in common, Ps 92, 93 and 94. Yet these psalms occur in the opposite order in the two collections. Why is this? What are the implications of this difference?

Studies of Ps 90–100 attempt to explain the function of the canonical order of this sequence. For example, as outlined before, Ps 94 is a transitional psalm, harking back to Ps 90 and the end of Book Three; Ps 93 anticipates the praise in Ps 95–100; and Ps 92 is a response to Ps 90 and 91, which has several links to Ps 94. These observations, while valid, do not address in an effective way the question posed by the reverse order in the Tamid Psalms. Why the order Ps 92, 93, 94 and not 94, 93, 92? With minor alterations, the preceding explanation for the accustomed ordering of Ps 90–100 would also explain an unusual order in which Ps 94 and 92 were reversed (i.e., the order Ps 90, 91, 94, 93, 92). In the case of this re-ordered sequence, one could argue that Ps 94 is a re-iteration of Ps 90 and 91, closing with an expression of trust; that Ps 92 is a hinge, answering the fears of Ps 90, 91 and 94, and intensifying the expression of trust at the close of Ps 94; and that, as before, Ps 93 anticipates the later psalms. Indeed, in some way, this order is more satisfying,

since the sequence Ps 90, 91, 94, 93, 92 builds to a climactic expression of trust.[31]

The aim here is not to argue for emendation of the received order of the MT Psalter, but to demonstrate that observations on the order of Ps 92, 93, 94 offered in studies of Ps 90–100 are not subtle enough to differentiate the customary order from the order in the Tamid Psalms. These observations would also be valid (with little change) if Ps 92 and 94 were switched. Thus they cannot shed light on the motivation for an editor to choose to order the psalms in one way (Ps 92, 93, 94) rather than another (Ps 94, 93, 92).

The matter of order would be of little scholarly value if it were not for the fact that the alternate, inverted order is found in the Tamid Psalms, a collection prominent at the central worship sanctuary, widely known and with the authority of traditional usage. The tradents of the MT Psalter would have known of this respected alternative order. Thus the peculiar divergence of the MT Psalter from the Tamid Psalms requires explanation. The resolution of this issue involves a much wider question than the rationale behind Ps 90–100, that of the history of the stabilization of the Psalter.

2.3 *The Stabilization of the Psalter*

Among the discoveries at Qumran was a large scroll of psalms, 11QPs^{a}, which contained most of the psalms of the MT Psalter from Ps 101 on, as well as other, more or less psalm-like, compositions.[32] The psalms, however, are not in the order in which they appear in the MT Psalter and other compositions are interspersed among them. The contents of the psalms scroll and its order immediately prompted speculation about its relationship with the MT Psalter. How are the discrepancies between the two collections to be explained? Were there two independent traditions of psalm collections or is one

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[31] In the ordering of the MT Psalter, it is odd and unsatisfying that the psalm of response (Ps 92) is followed at a distance by a recapitulation of the concerns to which it is responding (Ps 94) and a weaker expression of trust. It is as if the trust has decayed during Ps 93, but for what reason?

[32] The scroll was published by J. A. Sanders, *The Psalms Scroll of Qumran Cave 11 (11QPs^{a})* (DJD 4; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965). Although 11QPs^{a} starts with Ps 101, it contains Ps 93 before Ps 141. Fragments of the MT Psalter were also found at Qumran. For a comprehensive study of Qumran Psalms scrolls, see Peter W. Flint, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms* (*STDJ* 17; Leiden: Brill, 1997).

collection secondary to the other? What information does the Qumran material provide about the development of the Psalter and the process by which the now-accepted Psalter came to be the dominant collection of psalms?

Two opposing positions emerged in ensuing debate about the formation of the Psalter. The first, now dominant, sees the Psalter as still fluid in the late Second Temple period.[33] In this scenario, the order and contents of the first three books of the Psalter (Ps 1–89) had become (relatively) fixed by the start of the second century B.C.E. and subsequent formation of the Qumran community, but there was considerable variation in the psalms that followed.[34] At Qumran, different psalters were in use, one matching the early MT Psalter, another a variant like that found in 11QPs^{a}.[35] Both of these collections were esteemed by the community; it would be incorrect to say that one was primary or held special authority and the other derived or regarded as less authoritative. Other psalters may have circulated in Judaism. The version which became the MT Psalter in the Hebrew Bible was just one variant among others, probably not even *primus inter pares*. Its dominance did not come about until much later, in the first century C.E.[36]

The second position posits that the MT Psalter had become fixed and widely accepted well before the start of the second century B.C.E. The close agreement between the LXX Psalter and the MT Psalter is taken as evidence for this. In this view, there were other collections

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[33] This was first proposed by James A. Sanders and recently ably defended by Peter W. Flint; see his *Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls* or his shorter exposition of the salient points, "The Book of Psalms in the Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls," *VT* 48 (1998): 453–72. The historical contours of the debate are sketched in Sanders, Review of Peter W. Flint, *The Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls and the Book of Psalms*, *DSD* 6 (1999): 84–89. See also Sanders, "The Qumran Psalms Scroll (11QPs^{a}) Reviewed," in *On Language, Culture, and Religion: In Honor of Eugene A. Nida* (ed. Matthew Black and William A. Smalley; The Hague: Mouton, 1974), 79–99; Wilson, *Editing*; idem, "The Qumran Psalms Scroll Reconsidered: Analysis of the Debate," *CBQ* 47 (1985): 624–42.

[34] Although stable, some allowance must be made for revisions associated with the final editorial shaping of the whole Psalter, e.g., the possible inclusion of Ps 1 and other didactic elements.

[35] Several mss preserve an arrangement that does not differ significantly from the MT, e.g., 4QPs^{a}, 4QPs^{b} 4QPs^{c}, 11QPs^{c}, 11QPs^{d}. See Flint, *Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls*, 31–49.

[36] Flint argues for a two-step process of stabilization, Ps 1–89, then 90–150; others suggest gradual stabilization of the second half of the MT Psalter; see *Dead Sea Psalms Scrolls*, 143–46.

of psalms, but these did not command the same respect as the MT Psalter and were formed with a specific limited purpose in mind. The Psalms Scroll 11QPs[a] is one of these secondary collections, derived in large part from the MT. Liturgical considerations underlie its order.[37]

What part, if any, might the Tamid Psalms play in this debate over the stabilization of the Psalter? On the surface, it may appear that the Tamid Psalms can be accommodated by either theory. In the first scenario they may be viewed as just another collection of psalms, perhaps in the order they appeared in the levitical psalter of the Temple singers. In the second, as a secondary *liturgical* rearrangement of the older MT Psalter. These explanations, however, are inadequate. They do not pay due consideration to information and inferences about the Tamid Psalms that have come to light in the

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[37] This scenario was championed by Patrick W. Skehan among others; see "A Liturgical Complex in 11QPs[a]," *CBQ* 34 (1973): 195–205. Recent supporters of early stabilization include Roger T. Beckwith, "The Early History of the Psalter," *TynBul* 46 (1995): 1–27, esp. 20–22 and Enzo Cortese, "Sulle Redazioni Finali del Salterio," *RB* 106 (1999): 66–100. The liturgical basis for the order of 11QPs[a] is variously understood. In Skehan's study, the supposed liturgical complex formed by several consecutive psalms has the property that it can be partitioned for responsive use, that is, into verses spoken alternately by a worship leader and assembly, although there is no evidence that it was ever so used. Skehan judged 11QPs[a] to be a song book for Levites, see Skehan, "The Divine Name at Qumran, in the Masada Scroll, and in the Septuagint," *BIOSCS* 13 (1980): 42 n. 16. On the basis of esoteric arithmetical calculations backed by intertextual allusions, Beckwith explained 11QPs[a] as a collection of psalms, in order, for daily use (but note the thesis of Michael Chyutin that the psalms after Ps 89 were for use on Sabbaths and other festivals, *not* daily use). One source of confusion lies in the use of the term "liturgical." A text is liturgical only by virtue of its relation to some worship ritual. However, there is a tendency to use the term "liturgical" in an absolute way, as if its meaning were self-evident. For example, Charles Briggs curtly notes that certain features of the MT Psalter, including the positions of Ps 94 and 95, are based on "liturgical reasons," without any indication of what these reasons might be; and similarly Susan Gillingham claims "the Psalter is primarily a *liturgical* book." In contrast, in this study the Tamid Psalms are called liturgical because ancient witnesses assert they were used in a specific ritual. See further Roger T. Beckwith, "The Qumran Psalter: The Courses of the Levites and the Use of the Psalms at Qumran," in *Calendar and Chronology, Jewish and Christian* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 141–66, first published in *RQ* 11 (1984): 499–524; Charles A. Briggs and Emilie G. Briggs, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1906), 1:lxxx; Michael Chyutin, "The Redaction of the Qumranic and the Traditional Book of Psalms as a Calendar," *RQ* 16 (1994): 367–95; Susan Gillingham, review of David C. Mitchell, *The Message of the Psalter: An Eschatological Programme in the Book of Psalms*, *RBL* 2 (2000): 260; repr. from *JBL* 118 (1999).

course of the present study. In what follows, it is argued that the first theory of the late stabilization of the MT Psalter, as it has been formulated up to now, does not adequately account for the character of the Tamid Psalms, and so the Tamid Psalms disconfirm this theory as it now stands. The crucial question is that of the order of the psalms: Why do Ps 94, 93, 92 occur in different orders in the MT Psalter and the Tamid Psalms?

The properties of the Tamid Psalms relevant to this question are summarized as follows:

1. The Tamid Psalms are a liturgical collection from the late Second Temple period;
2. Their order in performance differs from that found in the MT Psalter. In particular, consecutive psalms in the MT Psalter appear in reverse order – Ps 82 and 81, and Ps 94, 93 and 92;
3. They have only Ps 93 in common with 11QPs^{a};
4. They were part of an important ritual in Jerusalem, the primary worship sanctuary, and so have prestige associated with place of use;
5. The collection was widely known in Palestine and the Diaspora, through the functions of the *Maʿamad* and the reports of pilgrims;
6. The collection had the prestige of a long tradition of use, perhaps dating from the second century B.C.E.;
7. Knowledge of the collection was preserved in rabbinic circles and the LXX after the fall of Jerusalem;
8. As a literary composition, the collection has a strong internal logic (psychological and narrative) supporting the order of the psalms.

In the first theory, the MT Psalter was not the regnant collection of psalms in the late Second Temple period, but only achieved prominence in the first century C.E. In this scenario, there were multiple psalters in existence and these were esteemed by the different communities in which they were used. The MT Psalter was one of these. The other collections were lost through the circumstances of history; the Jewish revolt, for example, probably caused the depopulation of the Qumran site and the consequent discontinuation there of 11QPs^{a}. The MT Psalter was preserved by some community that survived the war.

However, the situation of the Tamid Psalms was not like that of 11QPs^{a}. These seven psalms were widely known, probably by all communities (point 5). They had the authority of place and tradition

(points 4, 6). Knowledge of them was preserved, indeed, preserved by circles that came to dominance in the form of the religion that succeeded the Temple cult (point 7). They survived along with the MT Psalter. In a scenario that posits a plurality of psalters, it is not unreasonable to suggest that prior to the fall of Jerusalem, the Tamid Psalms would have commanded as much religious respect as the MT Psalter, perhaps even more.[38] Why then does the MT Psalter preserve a different order of psalms than that of the Tamid Psalms?

The heart of the question concerns the order of Ps 92, 93, 94. The other Tamid Psalms were drawn from the first three books of the Psalter, which both sides of the debate agree had largely stabilized in order and content before the second century B.C.E., that is, before the time the collection of Tamid Psalms came into use. Their locations in Books 1–3 of the Psalter could not be altered. Psalms 92, 93 and 94, however, did not have the force of traditional usage behind them. The collectors of the 11QPs^{a}, for example, omitted two of the three and put Ps 93 near the end. Why would the editors of the MT Psalter have allowed the order Ps 92, 93, 94 to appear in their collection?[39]

The reason cannot lie in the sequence of psalms themselves. As was argued in the previous section, the internal structure and logic of the sequence of Psalms from Ps 90–100 does not require the order Ps 92, 93, 94. Although this order may be explained on internal literary grounds, the explanation is also valid (with small changes) for the reverse order, Ps 94, 93, 92. Furthermore, the order Ps 94, 93, 92 has a strong internal justification (point 8).

Might the explanation lie with the liturgical nature of the Tamid Psalms? It is possible the editors of the MT Psalter were not interested primarily in liturgical use of the psalms when they assembled the collection and as a consequence would not have felt strongly

[38] Wherever the Jerusalem cult was venerated, it is plausible that the collection of Tamid Psalms, along with the psalms used at the major festivals, would also have been esteemed. So the Tamid Psalms would have commanded more widespread and deeper respect than any particular psalter, except in those communities that harbored hostility to the worship practices of Jerusalem such as at Qumran.

[39] A narrower formulation of the question concerns only the order of Ps 92 and 93. Since these are consecutive in the Tamid Psalms and the MT Psalter, why does the order differ?

constrained by the order of the Tamid Psalms.[40] However, the inclusion of the Psalms of Ascents (Ps 120–134) shows that the editors accepted at least one liturgical group of psalms. So the explanation does not quite address the point. If the editors accepted one pre-existing collection, why not another? What is there about the Tamid Psalms that would lead the editors to break a strong order (Ps 94, 93, 92) and replace it by a weaker one? The version of Judaism that came about after the Fall of the Temple remembered both the Tamid Psalms and the MT Psalter, so the two were not judged incompatible.

The puzzle of the order of Ps 94, 93, 92 in the MT Psalter comes about in the first theory because of the prestige (or rather, lack of prestige) that is assigned to the MT Psalter. If it is allowed that the MT Psalter was held in the same, or greater, respect than the Tamid Psalms, then the tension vanishes. But such a concession in essence cedes the case to the opposing side.

The variation in order does not create a difficulty for the second theory. In this scenario, the MT Psalter was fixed before the Tamid Psalms came into use. The MT Psalter order is original and the prestige of that collection was always greater than that of the Tamid Psalms. The order in the Tamid Psalms represents a creative variation of this order for liturgical purposes. Just as Ps 81 and 82 appear in reverse order in the Tamid Psalms, so do Ps 92, 93, 94. The creators of the collection followed the same principles of selection from a pre-existing MT Psalter for all the psalms. Even though the order of the resulting collection of Tamid Psalms was more satisfying than the original order in the MT Psalter, it would have been recognized as secondary, and despite its use at Jerusalem, the motivation to alter the order in its parent collection would have been low. In this scenario, the Tamid Psalms provide a well-attested example of the genre claimed for 11QPs^{a}, that is, a collection of psalms in eccentric order assembled for liturgical purposes.

The properties of the Tamid Psalms, in particular their non-canonical ordering, thus can be explained better under a theory of the early stabilization of the MT Psalter than under a theory that posits

[40] Whybray noted that scholars who have considered the composition of the MT Psalter tend to agree that cultic issues were secondary (*Reading the Psalms*, 30–31). Contrast the quote of Gillingham in n. 37.

fluidity in the Psalter until the first century C.E., at least at the current stage of the debate. Their order reveals a weakness in the scenario of late stabilization that as yet has not been addressed. Why would an editor of the MT Psalter in the first century C.E. have inserted or let stand the arguably inferior and less respected order Ps 92, 93, 94 rather than the order of the Tamid Psalms, Ps 94, 93, 92, which would have been superior on grounds of authority, use and internal logic? The simplest answer is that the MT Psalter already commanded great respect. The Tamid Psalms thus provide support for the theory that the MT Psalter stabilized well before the close of the Second Temple period.

3. *Other Liturgical Collections: A Comparison with 4QDibHam*

The previous section concerned itself with collections of psalms derived from or associated with the canonical biblical material. However, other collections of (apparently) liturgical texts from the Second Temple period also exist.[41] The texts from Qumran, now readily available in reliable editions for study, provide many heretofore-unknown examples – the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* (4QShirShabb), *Apocryphal Psalms* (11QPsAp), *Daily Prayers* (4QPrQuot), *Festival Prayers* (4QPrFêtes), and even perhaps 11QPs[a], to mention but a few. A comparison of such collections with the Tamid Psalms might also prove fruitful. In this section, such a task will be carried out in brief

[41] For a listing of such liturgical material, see James H. Charlesworth, "A Prolegomenon to a New Study of the Jewish Background of the Hymns and Prayers in the New Testament," *JJS* 33 (1982): 277. An overview of many of the texts can be found in David Flusser, "Psalms, Hymns and Prayers," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qumran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus* (ed. Michael E. Stone; CRINT 2/2; Assen: van Gorcum, 1984), 551–77; and the texts themselves in translation in James R. Davila, *Liturgical Works* (ECDSS 6; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000). Prayer texts from Qumran are reviewed by Esther Chazon, "Hymns and Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls" in *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years: A Comprehensive Assessment* (ed. Peter W. Flint and James C. Vanderkam with the assistance of Andrea E. Alvarez; Vol. 1; Leiden: Brill, 1999): 244–70, and in the dictionary article of Daniel K. Falk, "Prayer in the Qumran Texts," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. 3, *The Early Roman Period* (ed. William Horbury, W. D. Davies and John Sturdy; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 852–76; see also the longer studies of Daniel K. Falk, *Daily, Sabbath, and Festival Prayers in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (*STDJ* 27; Leiden: Brill, 1998); and Bilhah Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer and Religious Poetry* (*STDJ* 12; Leiden: Brill, 1994).

for one text from Qumran that shares with the Tamid Psalms the peculiar characteristic of a weekly structure.[42]

Among the texts from Qumran Cave 4 there was found what appears to be a set of seven daily prayers for use in a weekly cycle, named 4QDibHam. The copies discovered were in poor condition, all columns show significant damage and consequently about half the text is unrecoverable.[43] What has been preserved takes the form of prayers, with praise of God, historical recollections, confessions and supplications. Two fragments contain a reference to a day of the week, which follows after the word amen (אמן), and a blank space in the text (3 II, 3–5, the fourth day; 2 VII, 2–4, the Sabbath day).

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[42] A comparison with the Psalms Scroll, 11QPs[a], warrants more attention. If it is a liturgical collection with an organization based on some ritual cycle, then that cycle is far more complex than the simple weekly repetition of the Tamid Psalms; see n. 37. The theological emphases of 11QPs[a] in comparison with the MT Psalter have been studied by Gerald H. Wilson, "The Qumran Psalms Scroll (11QPs[a]) and the Canonical Psalter: Comparison of Editorial Shaping," *CBQ* 59 (1997): 448–64. He observes, among other points, a de-emphasis in the kingship of Yahweh but a greater emphasis on David, along with an awareness of human sin and weakness (453–55). He concludes that the focus of the Qumran Psalms collection "is on the lamentable situation of Jerusalem and the need for divine deliverance" which will come about through the action of a Davidic Messiah (463–64). This is at considerable variance with the outlook in the Tamid Psalms, which give Jerusalem a central role, but regard Yahweh as the sole protector of the city and make no mention of the Davidic line or a messianic figure. Consequently, it is unlikely that 11QPs[a] should be associated with the Tamid Psalms nor perhaps even liturgical practice in the temple, contra Beckwith, who attempts to explain the order of 11QPs[a] using Tamid Psalms and the creation story in Genesis and contra the positions of Beckwith and Skehan in n. 37 above.

[43] The texts were edited by Maurice Baillet, *Qumrân Grotte 4, III (4Q482–4Q520)* (DJD 7; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 137–77. He identified three copies of the document (4Q504, 4Q505, 4Q506). Others argue that 4Q505 is not a copy of this text; see Falk, *Daily, Festival and Sabbath Prayers*, 59–61. 4Q504 preserves a more extensive copy and the line references in the body of the discussion refer to it. An English translation with Hebrew original and some comments has been provided by Dennis T. Olson, "Words of the Lights (4Q504–506 = 4QDibHam[a–c])," in *Pseudepigraphic and Non-Masoretic Psalms and Prayers* (ed. James H. Charlesworth and Henry W. L. Rietz; The Dead Sea Scrolls: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations 4A; J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck): Tübingen, 1997), 107–53, and also Florentino Garcia Martinez and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition* (Leiden: Brill, 1997–1998), 2.1008–19. Falk presents a comprehensive introduction to the text and previous scholarship on it as part of his study of it as a prayer collection (*Daily, Festival and Sabbath Prayers*, 59–94). The various contributions of Esther G. Chazon should be noted, including her Hebrew dissertation (1991, not consulted) and essays in English, "4QDibHam: Liturgy or Literature?," *RQ* 15 (1991): 447–55 and "Is *Divrei Ha-Me'orot a Sectarian Prayer?*," in *Rappaport, Uriel* (ed. Devorah Dimant; *STDJ* 10; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 3–17.

This among other observations provides convincing evidence the document was a liturgical collection of seven daily prayers.[44] The name of the work is taken from the opening line of one fragments: dibre ha-me'orot (דברי המאורות, 8v:1). Often translated as "Words of the Lights" or some such, the precise meaning is elusive. It may be a self-description of the text as liturgical.[45] The prayers date from at least the first century B.C.E., and probably had their origin outside the community of Qumran.[46]

Although nothing is known about the ritual in which this text was performed, the formal parallel of a cycle of seven daily liturgical pieces that is held in common between 4QDibHam and the Tamid Psalms is too striking to go unmentioned.[47] It begs for a deeper comparative analysis between the two works. One must proceed with caution, however, since so much of 4QDibHam is lost. What is found in 4QDibHam may be compared with the contents of the Tamid Psalms, but it is inappropriate to make much of what is not present in the remnants of the Qumran document. In particular, a comparison of vocabulary and usage is naturally suspect in light of the amount of missing text. Nevertheless, enough of 4QDibHam remains to allow one to make a comparison with the Tamid Psalms in form, motifs, characters and structure.

From a form critical perspective, the contents of the two collections are quite different. The Tamid Psalms are a collection of psalms of different genres. The items in 4QDibHam, on the other hand, are communal prayers in the first person plural that follow a well-defined pattern (Heading, Opening Prayer, Body of the Prayer, Blessing, Response), which can be found in other late Second Temple period prayers.[48] Formally, the headings of the prayers, preserved for

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[44] Falk, *Daily, Festival and Sabbath Prayers*, 85–87. It is possible there was more than one prayer for Sunday; see Esther G. Chazon, "4QDibHam," 448; Falk, *Daily, Festival and Sabbath Prayers*, 66.

[45] Cf. דברי as "liturgies" in 1 Chron 16:37; Ezra 3:4. On the translation of the title, see Olson, "Words of the Lights," 108.

[46] Esther G. Chazon, "Is *Divrei Ha-Me'orot a Sectarian Prayer?*"; Falk, *Daily, Festival and Sabbath Prayers*, 61–63.

[47] On the ritual context of 4QDibHam, see Falk, *Daily, Festival and Sabbath Prayers*, 87–92.

[48] The weekday prayers show further structural similarities, e.g., an historical reminiscence as a basis for praise and petition. For an analysis of the structure of the prayers, see Falk, *Daily, Festival and Sabbath Prayers*, 66–73, 79–85; Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer*, 71–80.

Wednesday and Saturday but probably once included for all the seven prayers (3 II, 5; 2 VII, 4), are equivalent to the psalm superscriptions that identify the Tamid Psalms as daily psalms.[49] Likewise, the closing blessings and responses (3 II, 2–4; 2 VII, 1–2; cf., 4:15, 1 I, 7), although lacking a parallel in the Tamid Psalms, do find a match in the morning ritual where a blessing was given and a response made by the people.[50] Thus the kernel of the form critical variation between the two collections lies in the differences between the prayer sections proper of 4QDibHam and the Tamid Psalms. The difference is one of homogeneity across the collection: the bodies of prayers in 4QDibHam are alike in structure and tone (with some divergence on the Sabbath) but the Tamid Psalms are quite dissimilar from each other.

In the Tamid Psalms, four agents loomed large: God, the faithful, the wicked and Zion, that is, the location of God. There were also other agents of lesser prominence: angels, earth, waters, Egypt and gates. The cast of 4QDibHam differs from this. God appears in a major role and has many of the characteristics found in the Tamid Psalms – eternal (5 I 3; 8:2, 11), glorious and holy (3 II 6, 10; 4:16; 7:5; 8:4), giver of Law (5 II, 6), faithful and merciful, protecting Israel (1 II; 2 IV, V; 7), and even is called צור, Rock (2 V, 19). The faithful also appear in 4QDibHam. The implied speaker of all of the prayers are the faithful, who praise God, make confession and petition for support, and identify with the historical Israel. A major difference in the characterization of the faithful between 4QDibHam and the Tamid Psalms is repeated acknowledgement by the faithful in 4QDibHam of their failings and the failings of their ancestors, along with expressions of remorse and repentance. Such a stance is called for in one of the Tamid Psalms (Ps 81), but never overtly uttered in any of those psalms. The wicked do not feature in any of the extant sections of 4QDibHam. Enough of the text remains to suggest they did not play a significant role in any prayer.

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[49] The presence of such "superscriptions" in 4QDibHam provides evidence for the practice of identifying daily liturgical texts in the second century B.C.E. or earlier and is consistent with an early date for the LXX superscriptions of the Tamid Psalms.

[50] According to Sir 50:20–21, the blessing followed the psalm, just as it follows the prayer in 4QDibHam, whereas in *m. Tamid* 7 it precedes the sacrifice; see further ch. 2.1.6.

Instead of the wicked, the chief oppressor of the faithful is God. This comes about because of the failings of the faithful – they are being disciplined for their disobedience (1 II, 11).

Jerusalem, a key element in the Tamid Psalms, makes a short appearance as the glorious city chosen by God in 4QDibHam (2 IV, 3, 12).[51] Another feature of the Tamid Psalms was the absence of characters from Israel's history. In 4QDibHam, reference is made to the patriarchs (2 VI 6), Moses (1–2 III, 12; 4:8; 6:12), and David and the Davidic kings (2 IV, 6–7; 1–2 III, 15). Angelic beings receive one mention, as do the elements of the cosmos including the waters, in the context of a formulaic passage on the universal praise of God in the Sabbath prayer (2 VII, 6–8).

This survey of agents has also touched on some of the motifs of the collection. The two main motifs in the Tamid Psalms were summarized under the headings of worship and judgment. Both also appear in 4QDibHam, but their implementation differs. The prayers themselves are a form of worship presented by or on behalf of the community. Praise of God appears often (e.g., 7:3–5; 2 IV) and features in the Sabbath prayer, which presents all the cosmos – including the waters – praising God (2 VII).[52] However, throughout the weekday prayers there is a persistent motif of the failure of Israel, past and present, to worship Yahweh in the proper fashion, that is, of their failure to obey the commandments of God (1 II, 8–11, 15; 2 V; 4; 5 II, 5; 4:6). In the Tamid Psalms this form of motif only appears in Ps 81, as an observation placed on the lips of God. Elsewhere there are positive or encouraging statements about worship. In 4QDibHam this motif appears in confessions and is associated with expressions of repentance and petitions for forgiveness – the

[51] Egypt is the only other place to be mentioned in the Tamid Psalms (Ps 81:6, 10). Both Egypt and Horeb are found in 4QDibHam (1 I, 9; 3 II, 13).

[52] Of themselves, the parallels between the two Sabbath texts, Ps 92 and 4Q504 2 VII, imply little about the relationship between the two collections, as the motifs in 4QDibHam are common to early Sabbath prayers; see Falk, *Daily, Festival and Sabbath Prayers*, 150–51; Chazon, "4QDibHam," 450–51. Falk gives a list of notable motifs found in Qumran prayer texts ("Prayer in Qumran Texts," 871–75). These include requests for spiritual assistance (knowledge, forgiveness and protection from sin), deliverance in salvation historical terms (gathering of exiles), reversal of covenant curses and election of Israel as God's son. Several of these are themes found in 4QDibHam, so the variation between motifs in 4QDibHam and the Tamid Psalms will also appear in comparisons with other prayer texts.

tone is one of communal expression of remorse, a posture absent from the Tamid Psalms.[53]

Coupled with the failure of the people is the motif of judgment. In 4QDibHam, there are statements about the present distress (and past sufferings) of the people, more so than in the Tamid Psalms (6:14–19; 4; 1 II; cf. Ps 94). These are explained in terms of the aberrant behavior of the people. In 4QDibHam, a direct link is made between distress and God's action. It is clearly stated that distress is the result of the chastising activity of God (1 II; 1–2 III, 6–11; 2 V, 3–5, 17–19; 2 VI, 6–11). In the Tamid Psalms, God's response to improper worship is to allow the nation to go its own way (Ps 81); God takes direct action to rescue Israel or to punish the wicked, but not to punish Israel. The contrast between direct divine intervention in 4QDibHam and the more hands-off approach of Ps 81 is marked.[54]

Motifs drawn from the history of Israel feature in each of the weekday prayers in 4QDibHam. These include the creation of humanity (8r:4–14), covenant (1–2 I–VII), the Exodus complex (flight, Sinai, Fire and cloud, giving of Torah, murmuring), the election of Israel and its kings (1–2 III, 4–6; 2 IV, 4–7; 1–2 III, 15–17; 2 IV, 6–9), Exile and Diaspora (2 V, 12).[55] By contrast, the Tamid Psalms are not so historically focussed. Most reminiscences are drawn from personal or communal experience (Ps 94, 92, 48). The references to Exodus are illustrative and atypical (Ps 81). Creation is present, but as scattered references to the establishment of the cosmos, not a longer passage echoing Gen 2. Covenant and exile do not appear. The absence of references in the Tamid Psalms to historical personages has already been noted. 4QDibHam is far more grounded on the history of Israel than the Tamid Psalms.

Some other common motifs ought be mentioned. Both collections contain references to Yahweh's care and protection of the people (2

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[53] Communal confessions similar to the prayers in 4QDibHam became common in the Second Temple period; see Falk, *Daily, Festival and Sabbath Prayers*, 72–73; Rodney A. Werline, *Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism: The Development of a Religious Institution* (SBLEJL 13; Altanta: Scholars Press, 1998).

[54] Yahweh's inactivity drew comment in the Tamid Psalms. In 4QDibHam, Yahweh is not inactive.

[55] Chazon, "4QDibHam," 448–50; Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer*, 92–99. Nitzan notes that there are intertextual links between the prayers in 1–2 I–VII and the covenantal curses and blessings of Deut 28 (99, n. 25); see also Falk, "Prayer in Qumran Texts," 872.

VI, 8–9; 6:6–11). In the Tamid Psalms, these appear as both individual and communal assertions of protection. Only communal references are found in 4QDibHam. These references to past support are coupled with allusions to present distress, more often in 4QDibHam than in the Tamid Psalms (6:14–19; 4; 1 II; cf. Ps 94). Sapiential motifs concerning knowledge and perception also appear in both collections (4:4; 1 II, 13–15; 6:3; 18:3).

From this short comparison of the two works, it should be quite clear that fundamental differences exist between them. General statements about common occurrences of agents such as Yahweh or motifs such as worship, judgment or appeals to the past cover deep divergences in thought – confessions of failure, punitive activity of Yahweh and an intense interest in national history. There is no hint of dependence between the two works. Nothing in the prayers or the psalms would provide evidence that the prayers might be appropriate partners for the psalms in the morning worship in the Temple or substitutes for them elsewhere.[56] From the surviving fragments, no case can be made for a confluent or competing use of 4QDibHam and the Tamid Psalms.[57]

The comparison between the two compositions, however, is not quite complete. One remarkable stylistic parallel remains for comment. Esther Chazon has identified a sequence of references drawn from the history of Israel running in chronological order through the weekday prayers of 4QDibHam, including the creation of Adam, Exodus, Sinai, the establishment of Jerusalem and the Davidic line, Exile and later troubles.[58] She regards this as more than mere coincidence. "Rather, this phenomenon points to an intentional historical progression in the weekday liturgy," and "clearly proves that this text is a unitary composition written by an author who either

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[56] The contents thus provide no support for the theory that 4QDibHam contained prayers used by the *Maʿamad* during the morning service; see Falk, *Daily, Festival and Sabbath Prayers*, 91; idem, "Prayer in Qumran Texts," 859, 875.

[57] It might be argued that 4QDibHam complements the Tamid Psalms in its emphasis on communal confession (and national history), and thus that these prayers represent a response to the emotional appeal of Yahweh voiced in Ps 81, that is, so to speak, that 4QDibHam is what happens on the human plane between Thursday and Saturday, when the Tamid Psalms present only celestial, non-human praise in Ps 93. This reasoning is no more than an argument from silence and is not persuasive. It requires that the Tamid Psalms predate 4QDibHam.

[58] Chazon, "4QDibHam," 448–50; Falk, *Daily, Festival and Sabbath Prayers*, 66–68.

composed the individual prayers himself or else thoroughly reworked existing prayers into a weekly liturgy."[59]

Chazon's perception of an historically based progression in the weekday prayers of 4QDibHam is akin to the case made in chapter 4 for a plot underlying the Tamid Psalms. It was argued in chapter 4 that a developmental structure was present in the Tamid Psalms on a narrative and psychological level.[60] This was an important feature of the collection and it provided the rationale for speaking of the collection as a coherent intentional composition.

There are, thus, two compositions from the late Second Temple period that share the stylistic structural peculiarity of containing superficially independent elements organized into a well-defined progression. Both compositions are liturgical and both are weekly cycles comprised of seven elements for daily use. One such composition might be regarded as an oddity. Two pique the curiosity.

Is what has been revealed here a stylistic device that was employed in the "composition" of collections in the late Second Temple period? This is, at least, an hypothesis worth exploring in greater detail for other texts. How many texts formed of collections of apparently separate units and created in the late Second Temple period exhibit evidence of a narrative structure? For such texts, what is the nature of this structure? What other features characterize the texts?[61] Are they liturgical? Cyclic? The Tamid Psalms have revealed a new and potentially fruitful line of inquiry into liturgical texts from the Second Temple period.

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[59] Chazon, "4QDibHam," 450, 455.

[60] Chazon does not find a psychological structure equivalent to that identified in the Tamid Psalms. The confessional mood of the weekday prayers is stable. The historical reminiscences create a link between the worshippers and their forebears and a bridge over which confidence in the covenant mercies of God will flow; see Nitzan, *Qumran Prayer*, 92.

[61] Chazon notes structural uniformity and linguistic parallels in the weekday prayers of 4QDibHam, and concludes these are to be explained on the grounds of literary creativity ("4QDibHam," 450–55). This may go beyond the evidence. As noted (n. 53, above), the structure of the prayers is not so unique. Also, the Tamid Psalms provide an example in which pre-existing psalms were organized into a progression with little apparent editorial revision. So the genius of the creator of 4QDibHam may not lie in the (re-)writing of the prayers as much as in the selection of suitable prayers from a larger collection.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The seven Tamid Psalms, sung at the daily service in the Jerusalem Temple in the latter part of the Second Temple period, have a rare distinction in this current environment of minute and exhaustive study of biblical and related texts. They have largely escaped attention. If noticed at all, they are usually passed by with a brief comment on their origins. Yet they are of more value than this. These psalms form a text that can be usefully studied in its own right and can contribute insight into the life and literature of the Second Temple period. The underlying aim of the present work is to rectify this oversight on the part of biblical scholarship and to cast light on the Tamid Psalms and their importance.

The collection of the Tamid Psalms (Ps 24, 48, 82, 94, 81, 93, 92) are approached in this study as a text assembled in the Second Temple period. Such an approach motivates investigation of topics customarily studied for texts including origin, setting, exegesis of parts, organization, interpretation of the whole and relationship to a wider literary and religious context. Since the Tamid Psalms have been largely ignored up until now, much can be said in these areas. Matters of origin and context are treated first in chapter 2. The Tamid Psalms are a liturgical collection. In chapter 2, extant ancient sources for their setting, the Tamid service, are reviewed. These give not only a picture of the service, but also an indication of its importance – the Tamid service was considered essential to the cult and was widely known in Judaism. At the conclusion of the service a psalm was sung. These are identified in the Mishnah tractate *Tamid* and the LXX as Ps 24 for Sunday, then Ps 48, 82, 94, 81, 93 and the Sabbath Psalm, Ps 92. Together they form the collection studied here.

The primary direction taken in this study is a literary one, motivated by the question of the extent to which the collection exhibits coherency. Examination of this question is preceded by a detailed analysis of each psalm in chapter 3. The discussions in this chapter exhibit some unusual features, since interest does not lie in original

or early use of the individual psalms, but in their interpretation in the late Second Temple period. Matters such as genre or setting are of minor importance, since these are all well-defined by the Tamid service, and scant attention need be paid to antecedents from pre-exilic times or from Ugarit or Mesopotamia. One example of a shift in interpretation that results from this different emphasis is found in the treatment of "creation-battle" (*Chaoskampf*) motifs in the psalms. An alternative interpretative pattern for these motifs was suggested, one that involved Zion traditions and a positive assessment of the relationship between Yahweh and the waters, as in the midrash on Ps 93.

In chapter 4, the central issue, integrity of the Tamid Psalms, is examined in regard to several features: shared vocabulary, common motifs, common agents, overall structure, identification of a theme and a rationale for collection and developmental characteristics, both psychological (the effect of the text on the reader) and literary (the proposal of a plot). Four significant agents are identified – Yahweh, the righteous, the wicked and Zion – and these are associated with two primary motifs of judgment and worship. It is further argued that these agents and motifs combine to provide a theme for the Tamid Psalms: the encounter with Yahweh that takes place in Jerusalem/Zion and offers judgment in the form of requital for human needs and past behavior. More than this, it is also observed that the sequence of psalms has a dynamic aspect. This dynamic movement can be seen in the first instance as a progression through the categories of psalms proposed by Walter Brueggemann – orientation (Ps 24, 48), disorientation (Ps 82, 94, 81) and new orientation (Ps 93, 92). Closer analysis reveals that the Tamid Psalms can be read as a narrative with a plot that describes the encounter of the righteous with Yahweh at Zion. The plot contains various literary devices, including complication, suspense, character development and resolution. The evidence provided by these literary considerations in chapter 4 is cumulative and leads to the conclusion that the Tamid Psalms as a group exhibit a range of literary organization characteristics to such a degree that the collection may be justificably regarded as a coherent composition, the product of intentional, almost authorial, activity.

On their own, the Tamid Psalms form an interesting literary text. However, their value extends beyond this. As a text from the late Second Temple period, they can be profitably used to shed light on

the period and its literature. Three examples of this are given in chapter 5, each one drawing on a different context in which the Tamid Psalms can be located. The first is the ritual context. Information about the service is conjoined with the literary contours uncovered by the study of the text as a whole in order to gain a better appreciation for the morning ritual and the role of the Tamid Psalms in it. This discussion is set within the parameters of performance theory. The second context is that of collections of psalms and the Psalter, an area of interest in recent Psalms scholarship. The Tamid Psalms provide an example of the way in which a collection of psalms might be organized. They can thus serve as a benchmark against which to compare arguments for the coherence of other subcollections of the canonical Psalter. Two comparisons are outlined – the Psalms of Ascents and Ps 90–100. The second comparison leads to a question concerning the formation of the Psalter. Why do Psalms 92, 93 and 94 appear in that order in the Psalter when the opposite order is found in the Tamid Psalms? It is widely held that the second half of the Psalter did not stabilize until the first century C.E. The theory of late stabilization, it is argued here, does not adequately address the order in which the Tamid Psalms were used. The third context is that of other liturgical collections. Here a comparison is made with the Qumran liturgical text 4QDibHam, a collection of seven daily prayers. There are some formal similarities, but many differences in content. The two works share a remarkable compositional feature – that of sequential development, as the prayers in 4QDibHam progress through chronologically ordered reminiscences of the history of Israel. How many other collections share this feature?

In each of these three examples, the treatment was not complete, nor do the three exhaust all possible contexts for the Tamid Psalms. What contribution, for example, might be made by the Tamid Psalms to an understanding of the theology of the late Second Temple period? Aspects of this question were touched on. For example, it was noted that the collection contradicts the assumption of a widespread hope for a Davidic Messiah; that these psalms disassociate Yahweh from violence; that they "advertise" the unique experience of Yahweh to be found in Jerusalem; and that the psalms might encourage the fanaticism that was displayed in defense of the Temple. The topic as a whole, however, is not explored systematically. The

Tamid Psalms might shed valuable light on the beliefs at the central sanctuary.

The Tamid Psalms may also prove useful in New Testament Studies. Jesus and the disciples may well have heard the psalms sung when they visited the Temple. Many early Christians, especially those with a Jewish background, would have been familiar with them. It would be surprising if there were no allusions to the psalms or the service in the writings of the New Testament. For example, in the Tamid service, the sacrifice of the lamb occurred at dawn, coordinated with the opening of the Temple doors. In the Revelation of St. John, the start of the seer's celestial vision is marked by the sight of an open door in heaven and shortly after this, the appearance of a lamb as if slaughtered. To what extent do other elements in the Apocalypse correlate with the Tamid ritual?

The Tamid Psalms are a remarkable literary and liturgical text from the late Second Temple period. The present study has hardly begun to explore their potential. It has introduced the psalms and described their context, identified the features of the collection and its coherence, and laid out a few of the ways this information may be fruitfully applied in other areas. For all that, it has only just scratched the surface of the contribution that the Tamid Psalms can make to an understanding of the late Second Temple period and its literature.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAWG	Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen
AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	*Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Edited by D. N. Freedman
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
ANETS	Ancient Near Eastern Texts and Studies
Anton	*Antonianum*
ANVAO	Avhandlinger utgitt av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOTS	Augsburg Old Testament Series
ATSAT	Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament
Aug	*Augustinianum*
BWA(N)T	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BHB	Bibliotheca Hispana Biblica
BI	Biblical Interpretation
Bib	*Biblica*
BIBALDS	BIBAL Dissertation Series
BibLeb	*Bibel und Leben*
BibSt	Biblische Studien
BibW	*Biblical World*
Bijdr	*Bijdragen: Tijdschrift voor filosofie en theologie*
BIOSCS	*Bulletin of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies*
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BibJS	Biblical and Judaic Studies
BN	*Biblische Notizen*
BOREAS	BOREAS Uppsala Studies in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Civilizations
BR	*Bible Review*
BRS	Biblical Resource Series
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BTS	Biblisch-Theologische Studien
BVC	*Bible et vie chrétienne*

BZ	*Biblische Zeitschrift*
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBL	Collectanea Biblica Latina
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CHJH	Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism
ConBOT	Coniectanea biblica: Old Testament Series
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CSA	Copenhagen Studies in Assyriology
DBSup	*Dictionnaire de la Bible: Supplément*
DCH	*Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*. Edited by D. J. A. Clines
DJD	Discoveries in the Judean Desert
DSD	*Dead Sea Discoveries*
EAT	Estudios de Antiguo Testamento
EH	Europäische Hochschulschriften
EncJud	*Encyclopaedia Judaica*
ErIsr	*Eretz-Israel*
EstBib	*Estudios Bíblicos*
ETL	*Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses*
ExpTim	*Expository Times*
FF	Foundations and Facets: Literary Facets
FOTL	Forms of the Old Testament Literature
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GKC	*Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. Edited by E. Kautzsch. Translated by A. E. Cowley.
HALOT	Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*
HBT	*Horizons in Biblical Theology: An International Dialogue*
Herm	Hermeneia – A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible
HeyJ	*Heythrop Journal*
HKAT	Handkommentar zum Alten Testament Second Series
HR	*History of Religions*
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
HvTSt	*Hervormde Teologiese Studies*

IBHS	*An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*. B. K. Waltke and M. O'Connor
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Int	*Interpretation*
IRT	Issues in Religion and Theology
JAB	*Journal for the Aramaic Bible*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
Jastrow	Jastrow, J. *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JBLMS	Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
JBT	Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie
JCS	*Journal of Cuneiform Studies*
JDS	Jewish Desert Studies
JJLP	*Journal of Jewish Lore and Philosophy*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JNSL	*Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages*
JP	*Journal for Preachers*
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
JPSSD	Jewish Publication Society Scholars of Distinction
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JR	*Journal of Religion*
JRitSt	*Journal of Ritual Studies*
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
JSPSup	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series
JSS	*Journal of Semitic Studies*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
JTSA	*Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*
LASBF	*Liber annuus Studii biblici Franciscani*
LBS	The Library of Biblical Studies
LJPSTT	Literature of the Jewish People in the Period of the Second Temple and the Talmud
MSÅAF	Meddelanden från Stiftelsens för Åbo Akademi Forskningsinstitut
MSU	Mitteilungen des Septuaginta-Unternehmens

MUKTF	Münchener Universitätsschriften: Katholisch-Theologische Fakultät
NCB	New Century Bible
NedTT	*Nederduits Gereformeerde Teologiese Tijdskrift*
NES	Near Eastern Studies
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
OBS	Oxford Bible Series
OBT	Overtures to Biblical Theology
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensa Analecta
OTE	*Old Testament Essays*
OtSt	Oudtestamentische Studien
PIBA	Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association
PTM	Princeton Theological Monographs
PTMS	Pittsburgh Theological Monographs
RB	*Revue biblique*
RevBL	*Review of Biblical Literature*
RevQ	*Revue de Qumran*
RivB	*Rivista biblica italiana*
RThom	*Revue thomiste*
SBFA	Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Analecta
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and its Literature
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
ScEs	*Science et esprit*
SDSSRL	Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature
SEÅ	*Svensk exegetisk årsbok*
SEL	*Studi epigrafici e linguistici*
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
SJOT	*Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*
SK	*Skrif En Kerk*
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SNVAO	Skrifter utgitt av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo
SPL	Spiritualités et pensées libres
SR	*Studies in Religion*

SUNYSJ	SUNY Series in Judaica: Hermeneutics, Mysticism and Religion
STDJ	*Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah*
StPB	Studia Post-Biblica
SVTQ	*St. Valdimir's Theological Quarterly*
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by G. Kittel and G. Friedrich. Translated by G. W. Bromiley.
TDOT	*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Edited by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. Translated by J. T. Willis, G. W. Bromiley and D. E. Green
ThSt	Theologische Studien
ThWAT	*Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament*. Edited by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren
TQ	*Theologische Quartalschrift*
TS	Texts and Studies
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
TZ	*Theologische Zeitschrift*
UBL	Ugaritisch-biblische Literatur
UCOP	University of Cambridge Oriental Publications
UF	*Ugarit-Forschungen*
VC	*Vigiliae christianae*
VKA	Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam, Afdeeling Letterkunde
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTG	Vetus Testamentum Graecum
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WTJ	*Westminster Theological Journal*
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
YJS	Yale Judaica Series
ZAH	*Zeitschrift für Althebräistik*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für alttestamentliche Wissenschaften*
ZKT	*Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie*
ZTK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*

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